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Tactical examples

Hugo von Helvig

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TACTICAL EXAMPLES

BY

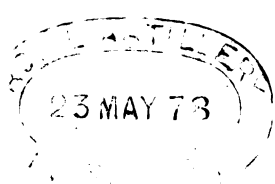
HUGO HELVIG

MAJOR ON THE ROYAL BAVARIAN GENERAL STAFF

VOL. II.—THE REGIMENT AND BRIGADE

TRANSLATED BY

COLONEL SIR LUMLEY GRAHAM



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1878

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In my preface to the first volume of Major Helvig's book I expressed my opinion that, after working out the examples on the ground, 'most men will come to the conclusion that the Germans are in advance of us in tactical organisation, and that their large companies are better than our small companies both for instruction in peace and for action in war.' I am myself firmly convinced of the superiority of German (I may say, continental) organisation in this respect; but I may perhaps have taken too sanguine a view of British military opinion on the subject. I should not return to it now had it not been handled lately in rather an offhand manner by an able and influential contributor to a popular periodical, a writer whose opinions upon military subjects have deservedly the greatest weight with all, and whose statements will perhaps be accepted as dogmas by not a few. I am referring to some passages in Sir Garnet Wolseley's article on 'France as a Military Power in 1870 and 1878,' which will be found between pages 14 and 17 in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*. Sir Garnet is, as I well knew before reading his article, strongly averse to what, for the sake of brevity, I will call the four-company system, and I am aware that his aversion to it is shared by many of our most influential and experienced officers. But he is not justified in assuming, as he does, that all British officers who have had the benefit of practical experience in war agree with him, and that 'those who think otherwise are chiefly either mere theorists or are men who have never commanded a company of British infantry in action,' unless he means to say that we who advocate the system of which he disapproves have never taken

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part in *modern* warfare, in which case he should include himself and those who side with him in the category of 'mere theorists,' for we are all of us in the same boat, as since the breech-loader and rifled gun came into general use British troops have not been engaged against an equal enemy, and we can only reason upon and attempt to profit by the experience of others.

Nor is Sir Garnet quite just to us when he leads his readers to suppose that the advocates of the four-company system, both here and on the Continent, are either actuated by a spirit of servile imitation, 'following the law of worship for success,' or are influenced solely by considerations of economy, without having any other argument to produce in support of their views.

We are told that the constitution of our infantry regiments will probably be discussed by Parliament during the present session. It will be well, therefore, to do what little we can to disabuse the minds of our representatives of the impressions conveyed by Sir Garnet's language, though it will probably occur to those who have least thought upon this subject that an organisation adopted, not hurriedly but after much discussion and consideration, by all the great powers, cannot be so destitute of merit as the readers of the *Nineteenth Century* have been led to imagine, whilst military men to whom the subject will be more or less familiar will know that the advocates of the four-company system in our army form a party despicable neither as regards numbers or experience, and that they have a good deal to say on their side of the question. I do not intend to enter here into details, but I will state very briefly the principal points in which the four-company battalion appears to me superior to the eight-company battalion. Admitting that a war battalion should be about 1,000 strong, and that with the present mode of fighting, which is the inevitable result of improvements in firearms, a greater extension becomes necessary both in breadth and in depth, rendering it impossible for the battalion commander to lead his 1,000 men efficiently, controlling them by voice and gesture, as in former days, much of his authority and initiative in action must be delegated to his captains, and thus the captain's command (or company) gains a greater importance than it ever possessed before. This subdivision of command, necessary as it has become, is still in

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itself an evil, as it is apt to interfere with that unity of action which is so desirable in war. It is therefore advisable to subdivide the battalion as little as possible; and acting on that principle, I prefer four companies to eight, as it is manifestly easier for the commanding officer to control the actions of the few than of the many captains. Again, one strong company of about 250 men (after the foreign fashion), told off for a certain task, either offensive or defensive, seems to me likely to be more than a match for two weak companies, each of about 125 men (after the British fashion), because in the first case there is unity of command, which in the second case is wanting, and if a major be sent in command of the two weak companies to restore the balance in this respect, he will be labouring under the disadvantage of having under him a tactical unit which is not also an administrative unit; a serious drawback. The opponents of strong companies, however, object that they are unwieldy, that no captain can possibly control 250 men fighting in extended order, and that therefore he will be at a disadvantage when he meets an equal number of men formed into two handy companies. This objection may appear at first sight well founded. I have myself commanded a company several times in action against Caffres, and have found considerable difficulty in directing it when skirmishing in that intricate country, although it consisted of only some 70 or 80 men; but I attribute the difficulty chiefly to my own want of knowledge and to the inferior training of my men, for in the days I speak of tactical instruction was at a very low ebb in the British army. Considerable improvement has been made since then, but still up to this time I do not believe that any one of our battalions has been so trained as to be capable of working in strong companies, nor can they be so trained until the four-company organisation is introduced. German captains have succeeded in directing their strong companies during the late wars with tolerable success, though labouring under the disadvantage of an insufficient establishment of subalterns; and, after a careful study of the campaigns of 1866 and 1870–71, and of many of the tactical works based on the experience of those campaigns, I remain deeply impressed with the fact that the superiority of the Prussian infantry over that of their enemies was mainly due

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to the manner in which the companies were handled. Only train and instruct our own officers and men properly, and the British captain will then find it quite possible to command 250 men. I would give him, however, an advantage which the German captain has not hitherto enjoyed, that of being assisted by a sufficient number of subalterns, for I quite agree with Sir Garnet Wolseley that it would be false economy indeed to save money by reducing the establishment in this respect. We should still, however, effect a little saving by adopting the four-company system without impairing our efficiency, and as all will agree that a wise economy is not to be despised, I claim this as another advantage of the proposed organisation.

Again, I believe that just as it would be injudicious to commence a campaign against a civilised foe with battalions much under the strength of 1,000 fighting men, because the wear and tear of war would soon reduce smaller bodies to mere skeletons, so in the case of a company, if you commence with an establishment of 125 it will soon dwindle to such an extent that it will cease to be an effective unit. This appears to be another point in favour of the strong company, which will of course retain its vitality much longer than the weak one.

Having thus touched upon some of the points in favour of the four-company system in war, let us see how it acts in peace. No army is kept on a war footing in peace time, because no nation can afford it.

In our own army the establishment of infantry battalions varies greatly, the lowest strength to which a large majority of those quartered at home is reduced being 605, all ranks, giving only about 65 combatants (non-commissioned officers and privates) per company. The company is divided into four squads, a very useful subdivision for purposes of discipline and administration, if the squad be a reality; but with these skeleton companies the squad system exists only in name and cannot be carried out in earnest. This is one serious drawback. Then with such a weak company, encroached upon too as it is in our service for various purposes, the captain rarely has men enough on parade for drill. Hence company drill, or rather company instruction, as understood and practised in the German army, is a thing unknown to us. And in this lies the secret of our

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tactical deficiencies, which any observer cannot fail to notice at our field days and sham fights.

The company has been for many years the great training school both for officers and men in Prussia. The other continental powers have appreciated this, and have already commenced making it such in their armies. We alone of the great nations have no such school, and I fear very much that in the absence of it our infantry would find itself at a great disadvantage were it to encounter that of Germany, Austria, or Italy. I have by no means exhausted the arguments in favour of the four-company system, but I think that I have said enough to show that it has much to recommend it, and that those who have introduced it of late years into foreign armies, and those who wish to introduce it into our own, cannot justly be accused of being mere servile imitators of an organisation which has been successful not on account of its merits but in spite of its defects, as Sir Garnet Wolseley would have us believe. If the subject should really come before our own Parliament for discussion, I wish that members would study the debate which took place in the French Assembly in the early part of 1875, and in which the question was really discussed upon its merits. The debate resulted in the adoption of the four-company organisation, though with the defect of a too weak peace establishment, fixed with a view to economy, which must much diminish, if it does not altogether impair, the value of the change. On that account I do not include the infantry of France amongst those which our own infantry would encounter at a disadvantage. Neither do I include the infantry of Russia, part of which is only as yet organised after the German pattern, and which appears to be inferior in tactical instruction to that of any other European power.

THE TRANSLATOR.

February 1878.

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PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND VOLUME.

We sought in our first volume, which treated of the *Battalion*, to contribute in some small degree towards the endeavour which is daily gaining ground to put an end to the instruction of troops in peace as a separate branch of military practice, by converting it into an actual preparation for war. We tried to form some living words out of the dead alphabet of our Field Exercise Book, that first and principal manual of tactical instruction, which seems no longer up to the times we live in, and which appears to require a thorough reformation, principally because its alphabet is too complicated and capable of various interpretations both in form and expression.

Many professional writers, in reviewing the first volume of this work, called our attention to the fact that the existing drill regulations must be sufficient for all purposes, as all the tactical exercises which we endeavoured to work out in the thirty examples for the battalion can be executed entirely in accordance with the said regulations.

Although a way was thus opened to us for deserting the ranks of the opponents of the present system and for joining those of its defenders, we must yet remain true to our colours and must still adhere to the opinion expressed in the preface to our first volume, that the unexampled victories of three wars were gained *in spite* of our drill regulations. We must moreover express the further conviction that thorough practical training for war during peace is not to be obtained *by means* of our Field Exercise Book, but only *in spite* of it.

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The second volume of this work, now submitted to the public, treats of the 'Regiment and the Brigade,' and seems to be a necessary sequel to its predecessor.

Fundamental principles of tactics must apply equally to all bodies of troops of whatever strength, if only faithfully developed from the special characteristics of each particular phase of action, and not extracted, at it were by chance, from the general amalgam.

The same fundamental principles will hold good in the case of a brigade, or of a still stronger body, as in the case of a battalion, yet a similar distribution of our forces being made in each case, it will in the latter perhaps convey the impression of undue dissemination, of disorder or pedantry, whilst in the former, where whole battalions, perhaps even brigades, constitute the units, it will present nothing surprising to the observer. We shall endeavour to show, in the thirty examples of this second volume, that the Regiment or Brigade may be led and trained according to the same principles as the Battalion, whether acting independently, in combination with the other arms, or as forming part of a larger body of troops.

We may mention the following as having been the special influences which guided us in working out the second volume; firstly, the firm conviction that it is absolutely necessary for the larger bodies of infantry to be systematically exercised with reference to the different positions which they may occupy in order of battle (first, second, or third line), in the same manner as laid down for the Cavalry in Chapter V. of the Instructions for that arm.* Secondly, a searching and repeated study of the works of Lieut.-Col. V. Scherff.

Infantry has with good reason been hitherto the arm which has regulated all reform and progress in tactics, at the same time pointing out the direction which the tactical efforts of the other arms should take. But at this moment, thanks to

* The Prussian Cavalry Field Exercise, dating from May 5, 1855, was modified by Cabinet order dated January 19, 1873. The alterations introduced were merely tentative. Chapter V., treating of the 'General Principles of the Conduct of Cavalry disposed in two or more lines,' then first appeared. The new formations were tried at the cavalry manœuvres of 1873, and having been modified in consequence of the experience then gained, a new edition of the amended Field Exercise was approved for experiment on June 4, 1874, and was finally adopted after the autumn manœuvres of the same year.—(Trans.)

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this very Chapter V., Cavalry has gone far ahead of Infantry. So as to prepare the larger bodies of cavalry for battle in a practical manner even in time of peace, so as to reduce to a minimum the friction arising from false ideas as to the actual situation, from want of independent action on the part of subordinate officers, from delay in the transmission of orders, and such like, regiments and brigades should be exercised with reference to their employment in first, second, or third line; that is to say, officers of all grades should be accustomed to act upon their own responsibility, in keeping with the general intention and in a manner suited to the service which they have to perform, without receiving long and detailed instructions.

This will hold good henceforward for the tactical exercises of cavalry regiments and brigades; why should not the same apply to similar bodies of infantry? Can the latter always fight after the same fashion? Will an infantry regiment, which opens the battle for a larger body of troops, move and fight in the same formation as one which has to deal the decisive blow upon the principal object of attack? Or will the infantry regiment ordered to occupy and defend a position obstinately adopt the same measures as one employed to make the counter attack in a defensive action? Will not a brigade be obliged to modify its dispositions, according to whether it forms the advanced guard of a larger force seeking for the enemy and desirous of engaging him, or whether it is an advanced guard stumbling upon an unexpected foe?

Will the same cut and dried system apply to all these cases, differing as they do so materially? Skirmishers; supports; company columns; two lines, if possible, for the sake of order, of equal strength; and some small force in reserve?

Infantry should be exercised in the same manner as prescribed for cavalry in Chapter V.; for infantry has now dropped behind cavalry as regards the regulated training of the larger bodies, and it has no time to lose if it wishes before the next serious trial to place itself again on a level with the sister arm in this respect.

We think we are now in duty bound to say a few words upon the other influence which served to guide us in our labours. However widely the able works of the Prussian Lieut.-Col.

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V. Scherff have been spread, and however deep the impression which they have produced, an impression which has made itself manifest in the sharp controversy between those who favour and those who oppose his ideas, yet the service which he has rendered in laying down clear tactical principles has never been sufficiently recognised.

V. Scherff deduces his principles from practice; he does not prepare a form and, then force it upon the living fact, but takes the facts clear and living as they really are, and seeks out the form most likely to suit them; and V. Scherff's 'Studies'* are really practical, because his deductions are based upon inner life and not merely depending upon externals. V. Scherff leads us to this sound and always life-like practice by the often difficult path of logical argumentation; he gives us, as before said, no rules, only principles.

We should dread being accused of plagiarism if we did not confess to having studied the above-mentioned 'Studies' over and over again, and to having almost without exception adopted their teaching without reserve. At the same time we admit that we only realised the full and complete value of the works in question after repeated study. Perhaps V. Scherff may justly say, 'Only a few have understood me, and those few have misunderstood me;' perhaps too we belong to *those few*. But in spite of this probability we have endeavoured to alloy the fine metal of V. Scherff's studies with commoner stuff, and to coin it into the following thirty examples as legal tender. As to the mode in which the following examples are to be practised, it is hardly necessary to say that we have now nothing more to do with the drill-ground in the narrow acceptation of the term.

If the immediate neighbourhood of the place of exercise does not offer the desirable variety of ground in feature and undulation, we must seek for a suitable locale and march to it for our drills; this will give us the opportunity of combining the 'tactical examples' with the practice of outpost duties and reconnoissance.

No scale is given with the plates; this must be based upon

* 'Studien zur neuen Infanterie-Taktik,' translated by Colonel Lumley Graham.

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the front of an infantry division (fraction of a company), which is assumed to be in round numbers forty paces.

Finally we feel ourselves bound to thank all our comrades who have taken the trouble to make a minute examination of the first part of this work, that upon the 'battalion,' and to criticise it in the professional papers. We thank them for the forbearance which they have shown as well as for the blame which they have expressed; we are not blind and self-confident enough to think that our work is faultless, on the contrary we have admitted the force of some objections and have taken advantage of them to amend our work. We give special thanks to the unknown critics and faultfinders (84 and 19) in the 'Literatur-Blatt' of the Darmstadt 'Militär-Zeitung' (1875); theirs were words which came straight from the soldier's mouth.

THE AUTHOR.

BERLIN: *April* 1875.

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NOTES.

1. Throughout the translation understand

By	'Lieutenant-General'	the Commander of a	*Division.*
„	'Brigadier'	„ „	*Brigade.*
„	'Colonel'	„ „	*Regiment.*
„	'Commandant'	„ „	*Battalion.*
„	'Captain'	„ „	*Company.*

2. The English word 'Division' is used in two senses: first, to render the German word *Division* signifying a body of cavalry or infantry consisting of two or more brigades, in which case it is printed in italics; secondly, to render the German word *Zug*, signifying a fraction of a company, squadron, or battery, in which case it is printed in ordinary type.

3. A German infantry *Division* on the war footing consists properly of two infantry brigades, four batteries, and one regiment of cavalry.

A brigade of infantry properly consists of two regiments.

An infantry regiment properly consists of three battalions.

Establishment of a war company—5 officers, 249 other ranks.

„ „ squadron „ 150 „

For other tactical details refer to Translator's Preface, vol. i.

4. In the Plates.—The numbers of the companies are shown in small Arabic numerals. Those of the regiments (from Example 51 onwards) also in Arabic numerals, but of a larger size. Those of the battalions in Roman numerals. The letter J in some of the later plates indicates the 'rifle' battalion, of which there is generally one per army corps (*Jäger* or *Schützen*).

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Errata and omissions in the plates.

Plate 191.—Insert 1 between the two battalions at the bottom of fig. 2.

„ 192.—Substitute 2 for 1 between the two half battalions in fig. 3. Substitute 2 for 1 below the skirmishers in fig. 4.

„ 193.—Substitute 2 for 1 below the right flank of the skirmishers in fig. 5.

„ 196.—Insert 1 between the two battalions on the right of fig. 1, and II below the foremost of the said battalions.

„ 197.—Substitute II^1 for II^2 on the right of both figs. 3 and 4.

„ 208.—Substitute 2 for 1 below all the battalions in first line on the left of the road, fig. 6.

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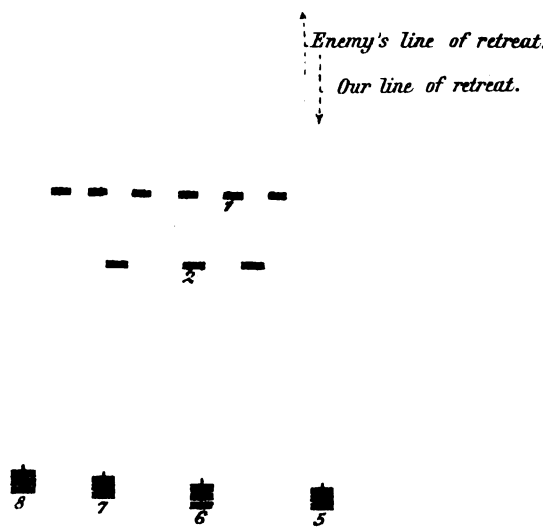
31st Example.

Fig 1.



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31st EXAMPLE.

1½ BATTALIONS (6 COMPANIES) AGAINST 1 BATTALION AND 2 GUNS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The enemy, being superior at long ranges, forces us to an early deployment by his artillery fire; he can commence the action earlier and with greater effect than we can; in the further prosecution of the fight his artillery prevents us from remaining or moving in columns of any size, and, should we aim at a turning movement, obliges us to make a very wide sweep; at the decisive moment the enemy's artillery, having meanwhile taken up a position more to the rear and to the flank, can open a very powerful fire upon the assailants, and thus effectively prepare the way for the offensive return of the defenders. Hence the attacking party is compelled to break itself up into a number of small bodies as soon as the artillery fire of the defenders becomes effective; a part of the advanced body intended to open the attack will direct its fire exclusively upon the enemy's guns, whilst the main body will, if possible, be directed against the flank of the defenders, at the same time keeping sufficient force in reserve to parry the counter-stroke which the enemy will probably make at the moment of the final assault.

1½ battalions form the infantry of an advanced guard, whose cavalry, accompanied by some horse-artillery guns, has been detached to the left so as to turn a defile whose passage is difficult for the latter arms. The detachment is marching in column of sections, half of the first battalion forming advanced guard and support, the second battalion forming the main body.

One battalion and two guns, part of the enemy's rear-guard, have been left at the entrance of a defile, so as to allow a considerable waggon-train to make some progress to the rear.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

Our infantry comes suddenly under artillery fire, some shells falling close to the main body.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Extends a company in groups of half-sections; another company follows extended in groups of sections.

2 Bat. Forms company columns at double interval 600 paces from **½ 1 Bat.**; then,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

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Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy continues to keep up a lively artillery fire; the strength and position of his infantry cannot yet be made out.

Meanwhile, the first line of our detachment (½ **1 Bat.**) has advanced to within 1,600 paces of the enemy's artillery. Some well-aimed rifle shots proceed from the ground on the right and left front of the guns, some of the enemy's troops appearing to have taken up a position in front of rather a long causeway.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. (First line); one company extends, and, without answering the enemy's infantry fire, directs volleys by groups against the guns. The whole advance.

2 Bat. Takes ground to the right diagonally.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's infantry opens a heavy fire; the ground to both the right and left front of the guns is evidently occupied by strong lines of skirmishers.

Our first line has got to within 1,200 paces of the guns; the enemy's infantry being still about 800 paces distant.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Halts and opens fire, then advances by successive divisions to within 400 paces of the enemy's infantry. The half-battalion occupies the enemy in front and tries to drive away his guns.

2 Bat. Attacks the enemy's left flank, taking ground to the right, under cover if possible, or else company after company at the run, until it has moved 500 paces beyond the right flank of the first line.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy shows in advance of his artillery position about two companies extended in skirmishing order; behind each of his flanks we can make out small bodies in close order; the artillery directs its fire exclusively upon our **2 Bat.**

Our first line has approached to within about 400 paces of the enemy's skirmishers with pretty considerable loss; **2 Bat.** has gained the position assigned to it (500 paces beyond the flank of the first line), and has got some cover from the enemy's artillery fire by lying down.

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Fig. 2.

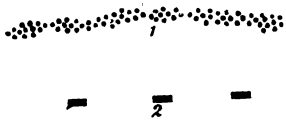
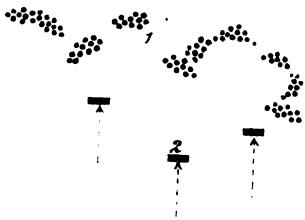


Fig. 3.

Enemy's line of skirmishers.



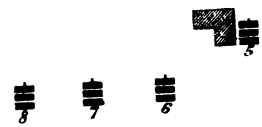
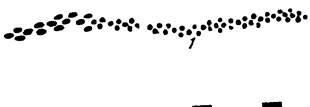


Fig. 4.

Enemy's line of skirmishers.



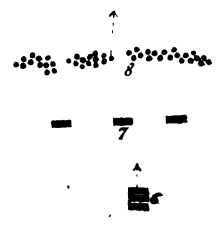


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Fig. 5.

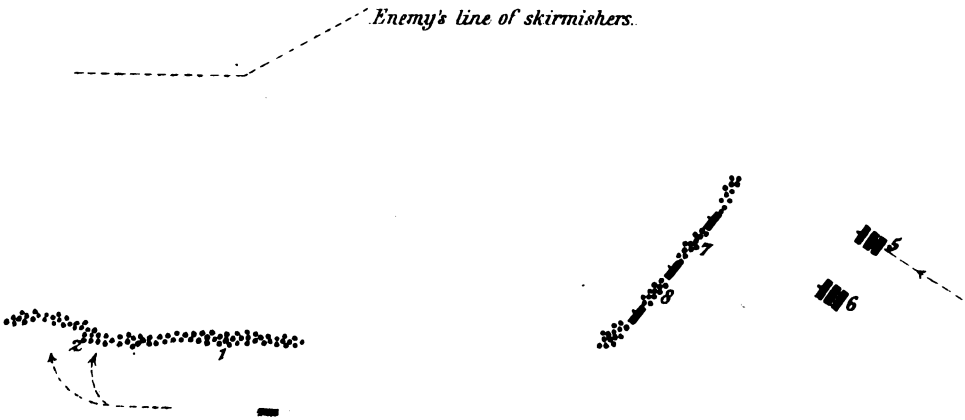
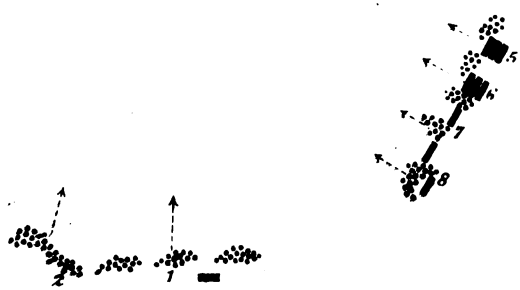


Fig. 6.



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Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. One division directs its fire exclusively against the enemy's guns (group-volleys).

2 Bat. One company extends from the left; one company in support, one company main body, one company reserve.

The whole advance and, when up to the first line, change front half left.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

Some bodies in close order are seen moving at the run to the flanks of the enemy's line of skirmishers as reinforcements; the guns fire salvoes without intermission, and are drawn back gradually without limbering up.

Our **2 Bat.** has taken up its position to the right of our first line; we now for the first time fully make out the strength of the enemy.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Prolongs the skirmishing line to the left with two divisions.

2 Bat. The reserve company moves forward to the main body; supports join the line of skirmishers.

Sixth Period.

The enemy's guns limber up and gallop back along the causeway; his skirmishers on the left flank have been reinforced, whilst part of those on his right flank run to the rear.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Advances to the attack.

2 Bat. Attacks at the same moment.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

We remark that two of the enemy's companies are retiring in a great hurry through the defile, the two other companies covering their retreat by a heavy rapid independent fire, themselves retiring by successive groups; the two guns have meanwhile come into action on the other side of the defile and keep up a heavy fire on our right wing.

As soon as the main body of **2 Bat.** has reached the line of skirmishers,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy succeeds, although suffering severe loss, in reaching and passing through the defile on the other side of which the infantry, which has already passed over, extends into a strong line of skirmishers, and aids the guns in firing upon our right wing.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Retires quickly 500 paces, halts, assembles and takes cover (lying down if necessary).

2 Bat. Occupies the entrance of the defile with two companies; the remainder retire quickly 500 paces, halt, assemble and take cover (lying down if necessary).

Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 8.)

The enemy, seriously threatened by the cavalry and artillery of our advanced guard, which has passed farther to the left, beats a hasty retreat.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. The two companies standing at the entrance of the defile form the advance; the two other companies and **½ 1 Bat.** form the main body.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

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Fig. 7.

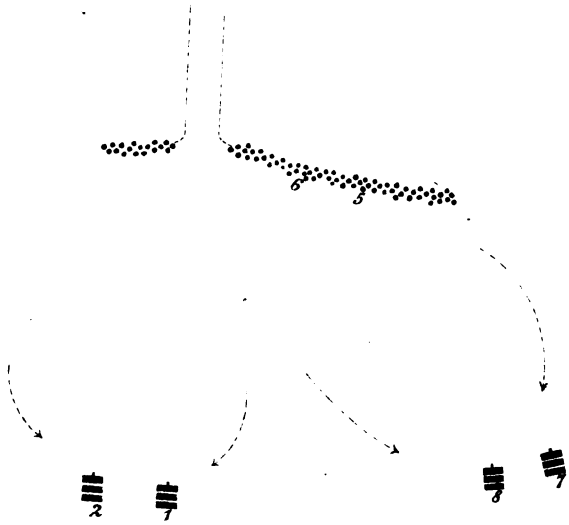
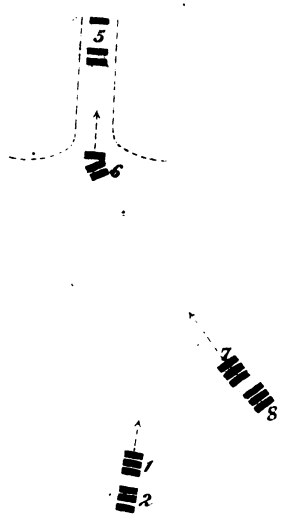


Fig. 8.



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32nd Example.

Fig. 1.

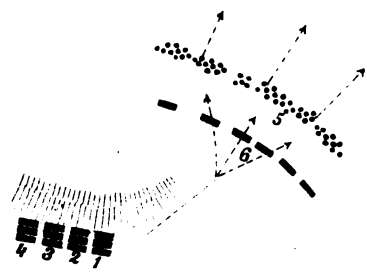
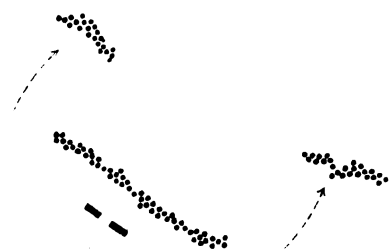


Fig. 2.



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32nd EXAMPLE.

1½ BATTALIONS (6 COMPANIES) AGAINST 1 BATTERY (6 GUNS) AND 2 COMPANIES.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The very great superiority of the enemy at long ranges evidently compels us to an early deployment into small columns, offering the least possible mark for the enemy's artillery; therefore, as soon as its fire begins to be felt (at from 2,000 to 2,500 paces), we must break our force up into company columns and, where possible, at double interval. If the enemy's strength, as here supposed, has been made out during the first stage of the combat, it will be advisable, whilst assuming the formation most appropriate for troops exposed to artillery fire, to proceed at once without any long preparation to the decisive attack, and, in the case before us, either to turn both flanks, or to act in front against the artillery with a small portion of our force, whilst we throw the rest against one flank.

1½ Bats. stand under cover in line of contiguous company columns behind an elevation in the ground.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

One of the enemy's batteries unlimbers and opens fire some hundred paces in rear of a body of his infantry, which is covered by some buildings and beyond rifle range.

The enemy's infantry is from 1,200 to 1,400 paces from our troops; his actual strength cannot yet be made out.

Dispositions:

½ 2 Bat. Advances rapidly 600 paces towards the enemy's infantry; one company extends on its own ground; another forms groups of half sections in support: the skirmishers commence firing as soon as in position.

1 Bat. Stands fast.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's artillery first fires upon our skirmishers as they rush forward; soon afterwards his infantry opens a steady fire which gradually becomes more lively.

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½ 2 Bat. has advanced rapidly 600 paces, and has begun to reply to the enemy's fire; the strength of his infantry cannot as yet be made out; in order to prepare the way for the main attack, and at the same time to gain information as to the strength and disposition of the enemy's forces, we make the following

Dispositions:

½ 2 Bat. The skirmishers, their wings reinforced by the supports, advance 200 paces nearer the enemy, increasing the rapidity of their fire as much as possible.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The fire of the enemy's skirmishers becomes hotter, but we cannot make out the advance of any detachments to reinforce them; the enemy's battery, which hitherto had only fired on some larger masses to the left of our detachment, now directs a portion of its fire upon the advancing groups of ½ 2 Bat.

After the fight commenced by ½ 2 Bat. has proved us to be considerably superior to the enemy in infantry, our commander determines at once to take the offensive.

Dispositions:

½ 2 Bat. Keeps up a fire on the front of the enemy, advancing to within at least 400 paces of his skirmishing line.

1 Bat. One half-battalion attacks each of the enemy's flanks, each half-battalion throwing out one company as skirmishers, the other company being distributed by divisions in support.

The whole advance.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy's battery has retired some hundred paces by successive divisions; it now directs its whole fire against the advancing half-battalions of 1 Bat.

Dispositions:

½ 2 Bat. Supports move up to the skirmishing line, and fire volleys against the battery.

1 Bat. Attacks as soon as it is in line with ½ 2 Bat.

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Fig. 3.

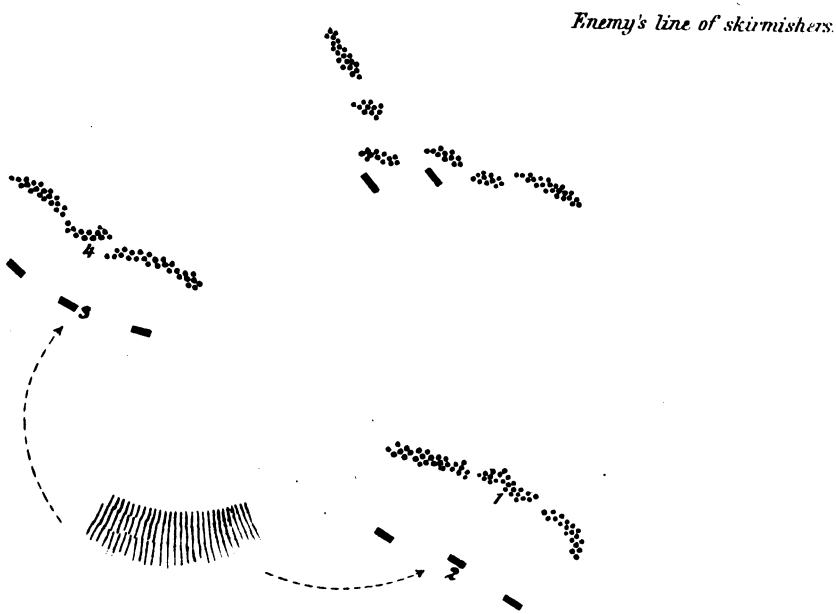

Fig. 4.

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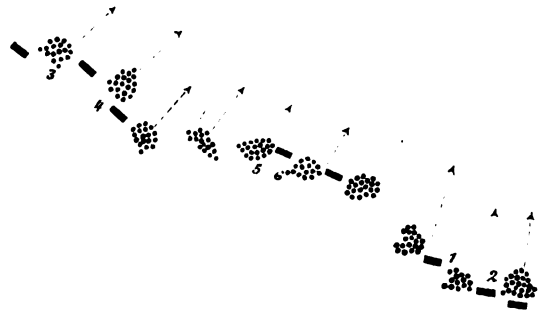
Fig. 5.



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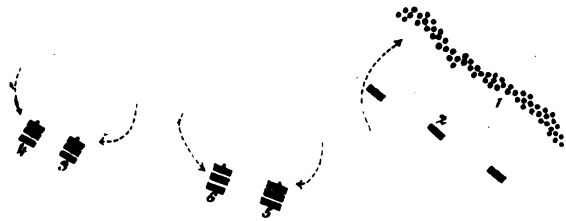

Fig. 7.

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Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's battery drives off; his infantry begins to retire hastily from the right.

Our commander determines to attack, even if **1 Bat.** is not quite up, so as not to give the enemy's infantry time to take post again firmly in the neighbourhood.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy's infantry does not wait for the attack, but goes quickly to the rear and occupies a new position about 600 paces further back and opposite to our right flank.

As soon as the position at first occupied by the enemy is reached by our troops,

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. The right half-battalion changes front half-right to drive away the enemy.
The other half-battalion assembles.

½ 2 Bat. Assembles.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The infantry of the enemy which had retired, again stands fast and opens a heavy fire from its new position; the battery has moved off to come into action elsewhere.

The commander of our detachment receives orders to send a battalion as quickly as possible to the left.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. The right half-battalion remains engaged with the infantry opposed to it, gaining ground to the front some 200 or 300 paces; the other half-battalion joins **½ 2 Bat.** and moves off to the left.

½ 2 Bat. Moves off to the left with the left half of **1 Bat.**

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Eighth Period.

The infantry opposed to the right half of 1 Bat. withdraws slowly.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. A division remains extended to observe the retreating enemy, whilst the remainder follows the main body of our detachment.

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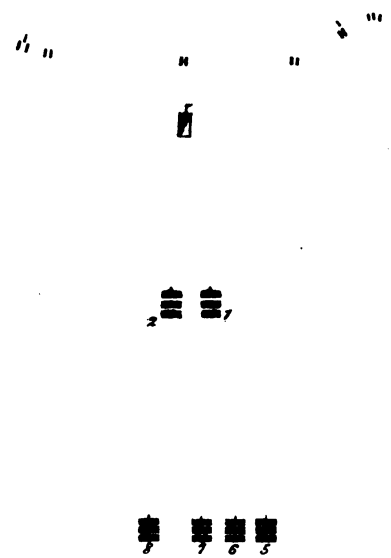
33rd Example.

Fig 1.



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33rd EXAMPLE.

1½ BATTALIONS (6 COMPANIES) AND 1 SQUADRON AGAINST 2 BATTALIONS.

Tactical Idea.

We are enabled, thanks to the cavalry attached to us, firstly to gain early intelligence as to the direction of the enemy's march, and as to his strength, so that it will be practicable without delay to direct our own forces to the decisive point and to develop our attack accordingly; secondly to conceal our own intended movements from the enemy, as his reconnoitrers will be kept at a distance. Whilst the enemy, who has no cavalry, will only gain information as to our strength and the disposal of our forces after the fight has been actually engaged, we on the other hand will be provided beforehand with this information by our cavalry detachment, and we may in consequence conduct the action from the very first as a preparation for the decisive attack. In the further prosecution of the combat the squadron will, moving at a considerable distance on each flank of our detachment, secure it from molestation; arresting the advance of, or at any rate making known as quickly as possible the approach of, any reinforcements of the enemy, and moreover holding itself ready to attack at once any of the enemy's infantry which may be dispersed or may have got into any awkward position. The attitude of the squadron will be rather of a threatening than of a more decisive character during the greater part of the action; but at the moment of the final crisis, of the decisive assault, it must be prepared to throw itself recklessly upon the foe, either to complete his discomfiture if he is retiring in disorder, or to oppose the counter-stroke which he may then attempt.

Our detachment has received orders to join as quickly as possible the right wing of a brigade already engaged with the enemy at a considerable distance.

The squadron is at the head, with advanced parties thrown out to the front; 600 paces to the rear are two companies, followed at 600 paces by a battalion.

The infantry is marching in open column of divisions. (In this as in all the following examples it is assumed that the skirmishing divisions have already been formed, and therefore that the infantry are two deep.)

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy has occupied some ground with his infantry which our detachment must pass on its march; our advanced scouts get under fire. As soon as the scouts have got under fire the squadron halts and looks out for cover; patrols are sent out at a rapid pace round the enemy's flanks to reconnoitre his strength, position, and extent of front; information is sent to our commander that we have come in contact with some of the enemy's infantry.

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Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Halts in rear of the squadron, forming company columns and taking cover or lying down.

2 Bat. Halts, forming company columns at double interval and taking cover or lying down.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy, showing a front of from 400 to 500 paces, receives the cavalry patrols with a sharp fire. Our cavalry reports that the enemy has occupied a position about 400 paces in extent with a strong line of skirmishers, and that two bodies in close order are remarked in rear of these, the whole force not appearing to exceed the strength of one battalion.

The brigade, the right wing of which our detachment is ordered to join, is engaged with the enemy on our left front at about 4,000 paces distance: our first object must therefore be to overthrow the right wing of the opposing infantry, and to communicate with the brigade by means of our cavalry.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. **1 Co.** extends and advances 500 paces towards the front of the enemy's position, holds him in check, and keeps moving on. **2 Co.** is detached to **2 Bat.**

2 Bat. Takes ground to the left 500 paces; is joined by **2 Co.**; attacks the enemy's right wing, **2 Co.** extended, **5 Co.** in support, by divisions distributed along the line, **6 and 7 Cos.** as main body 300 paces behind the left flank, **8 Co.** as reserve in third line to the left rear of the main body. The whole advance.

The Squadron. As soon as **1 Co.** advances against the front of the enemy, takes ground to its left, and on getting up with the third line (**8 Co.**) follows the attack of **2 Bat.**, sending out patrols to the left to secure that flank of our detachment and to communicate with the brigade.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy directs the whole fire of his skirmishers against **1 Co.** which is advancing by successive rushes.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Prolongs the line of skirmishers to the left with one division, which is thrown forward so as to turn the enemy's right flank.

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Fig. 2.

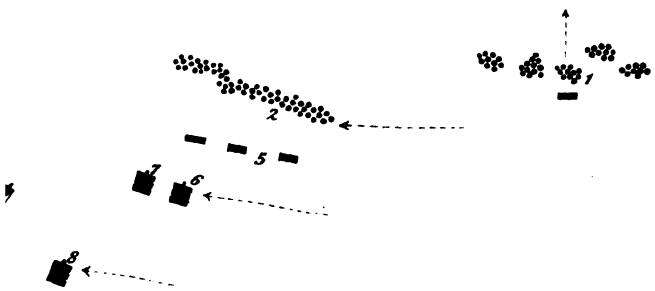

Fig. 3.

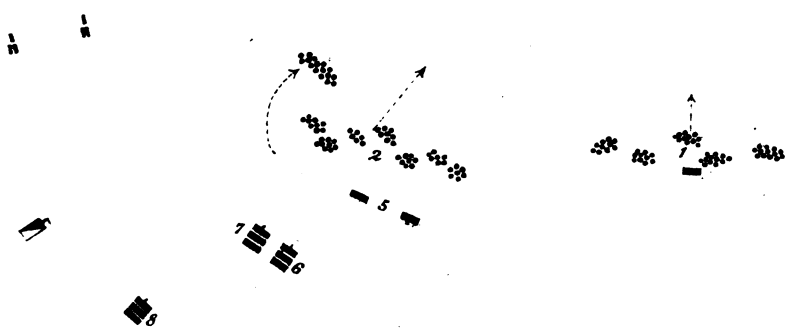

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Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

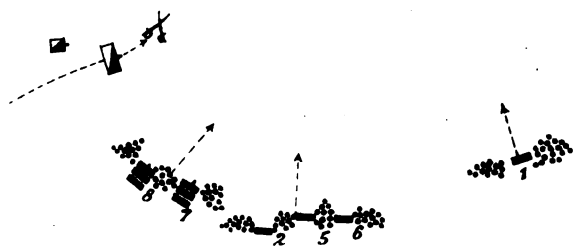
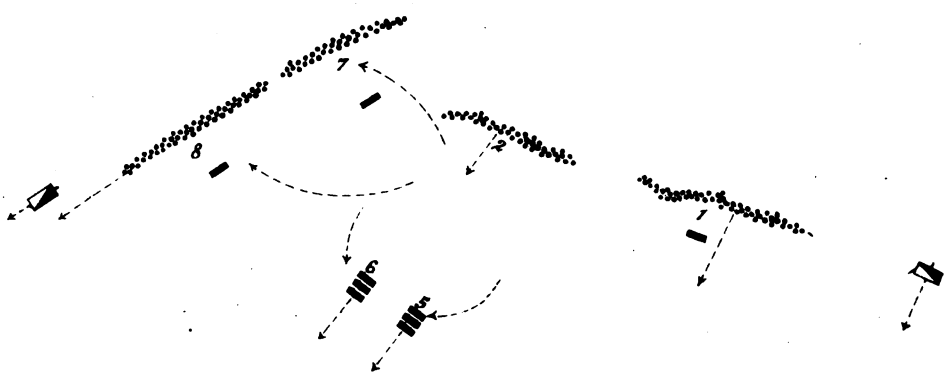


Fig. 6.



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Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

We remark that the enemy has prolonged and strengthened the right wing of his skirmishers with fresh reinforcements. He opens a very heavy fire from that side.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. When the skirmishing line is within from 400 to 500 paces of the enemy, immediate supports move up to reinforce; **6 Co.** also extends to reinforce the skirmishers, who throw forward their left offensively. **7 Co.** halts, waiting for **8 Co.**, the two together forming the main body.

The Squadron. Takes post 600 paces to the left rear of the main body. (The commandant of **2 Bat.**, the three division leaders of **2 Co.**, and the captain of **5 Co.**, fall out as hors de combat.)

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy has concentrated his main strength upon his right; we remark that he is bringing up his last reserves into the line of skirmishers.

Our cavalry patrols announce the approach of a battalion of the enemy, which threatens the left flank of our detachment; our commander thereupon determines to overthrow the force opposed to him before this reinforcement can come into play.

Dispositions:

The Squadron. Advances, as soon as our infantry attacks, to charge the enemy's right wing, sending out patrols to observe the approaching battalion.

2 Bat. The main body advances; as soon as it is up to the skirmishing line,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy gives up his position before we come to close quarters; part of his retiring skirmishers are ridden down by our horsemen, but the battalion which is approaching as a reinforcement makes itself felt by a dropping fire and by some volleys of small bodies.

Our commander determines to retire, so as not to be separated from the brigade by the enemy, who is now superior in numbers.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

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Dispositions:

2 Bat. **7 and 8 Cos.** each extends two divisions to the left flank; **5 and 6 Cos.** retire 500 paces and assemble; our detachment retires, **7 and 8 Cos.** covering the left flank.

1 Bat. **1 and 2 Cos.** remain extended, keeping the enemy's battalion which had been forced to retire from following us up; they also join in the retreat.

The Squadron. One half-squadron moves on the proper left of **7 and 8 Cos.**, the other on the proper right of **1 and 2 Cos.**; then,

Signal: 'The Whole Retire Slowly.'

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The approaching battalion of the enemy joins that which had been forced to give way.

As the enemy is no longer pressing on, our commander determines to resume his direct march on the brigade.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. **7 and 8 Cos.** form the advanced body, half a squadron covering their left flank, **5 and 6 Cos.** following in second line.

½ 1 Bat. Covers this march on the right, each company extending one division; the other half-squadron covering the right flank.

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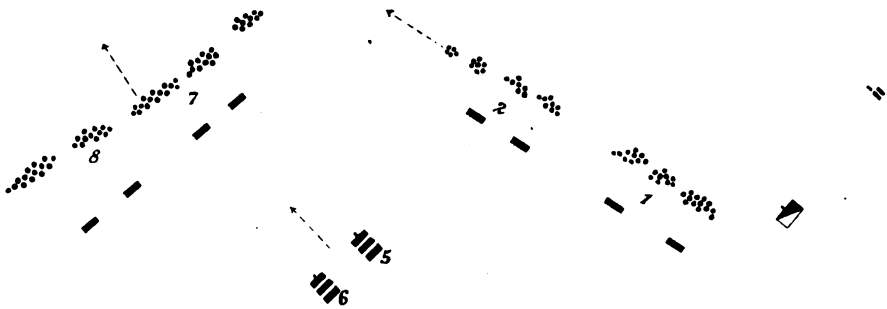
Fig. 7.



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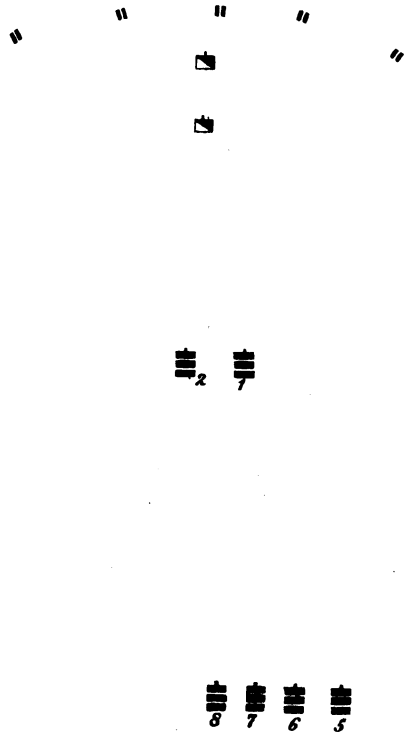
34th Example.

Fig. 1.



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34th EXAMPLE.

1½ BATTALIONS (6 COMPANIES) AND 1 SQUADRON AGAINST 1 BATTALION AND 2 SQUADRONS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The squadron which is attached to us has, speaking generally, the same task to perform as in the preceding example; but its performance will be a good deal more difficult, because, although greater manœuvring power and superior skill in taking advantage of the ground may enable us to gain early information of the enemy's movements and designs, yet it will as a general rule be impossible for us to conceal our own from his view, because he will use his superior force of cavalry to break through the screen which our horsemen will attempt to form; and our squadron, with a view to what will be required of it later on, must on no account expose itself at this early stage of the affair to be rendered unfit for action by the enemy's superior force.

As soon therefore as the direction of the enemy's march and his approximate strength have been made out, the squadron withdraws upon our infantry, giving way to the pressure of the enemy's preponderating cavalry without committing itself to a decisive conflict with the latter. It can then support the infantry in the early stages of the combat, and expedite its movements by careful patrolling so as to gain as soon as possible complete information as to the enemy's dispositions: as the fight goes on it will keep at a considerable distance on each flank of the infantry, securing it from surprise; and again when the final crisis comes it must be prepared to oppose vigorously the sally which will probably be attempted by the enemy's cavalry. In view of the supposed strength and composition of the enemy's force, it will be advisable for our own infantry to keep a reserve (third line) in hand for the critical moment, as the support of this reserve will be necessary to enable our cavalry to oppose successfully the sally which we have assumed that the enemy will make.

Our detachment has been despatched to threaten the left flank of a considerable force. The squadron leads the way, ½ **1 Bat.** forming the advanced body, **2 Bat.** the main body.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy has sent a detachment to secure his left flank; his cavalry meets with our advanced parties.

Our cavalry comes upon strong cavalry patrols of the enemy, but cannot as yet make out any infantry.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

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Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. As first line forms company columns at double interval.

2 Bat. Forms company columns at full interval.

The Squadron. Remains in front until it has made out the enemy's strength, or until forced back.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy shows a superior force of cavalry, which advances against our squadron followed by a battalion of infantry.

Our squadron is forced to retire.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Two divisions of each company extend; fire is opened, but at first only by individuals named by the officers; when the enemy is within 600 paces the whole skirmishing line opens fire.

2 Bat. **5 and 6 Cos.** take post as main body 300 paces behind the left wing of the skirmishing line; **7 and 8 Cos.** 300 paces to the left rear of **5 and 6 Cos.** as reserve (third line).

The Squadron. Assembles on the right rear of the third line, leaving patrols on the flanks of the first line.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's skirmishers open a sharp fire; he seems to concentrate his chief strength on his left.

Our commander determines to await the enemy's attack in the first instance, and afterwards to take the offensive from the left flank.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Supports move up into the skirmishing line.

2 Bat. **5 Co.** extends and prolongs the line of skirmishers to the left; **7 Co.** moves from the reserve, and takes post on the left of **6 Co.** at full interval.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy reinforces his skirmishers, who begin somewhat to advance.

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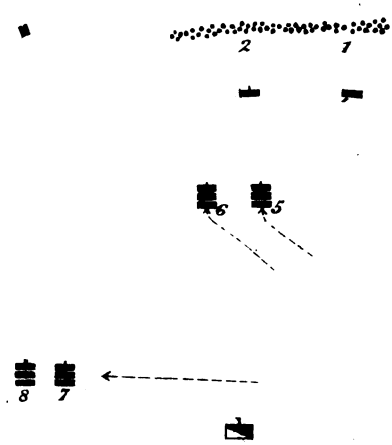
Fig. 2.



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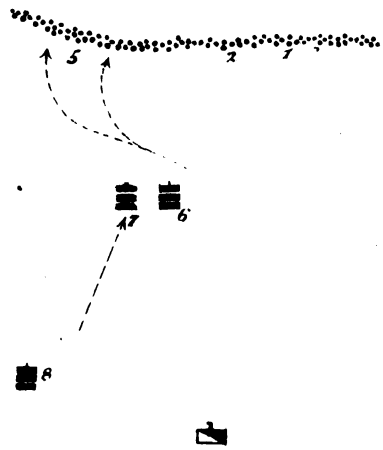

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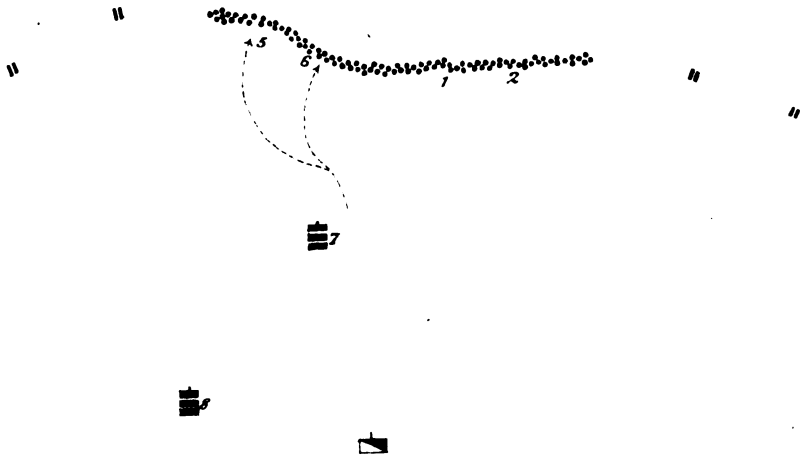

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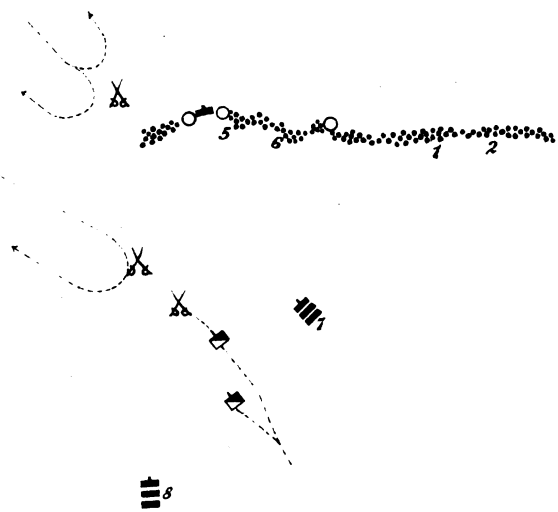

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Dispositions:

2 Bat. **6 Co.** reinforces the skirmishing line mixed up with **5 Co.**

Fifth Period.

We observe the enemy's cavalry moving quickly forward to relieve the right wing of the enemy's battalion, which is sorely pressed.

(**5 and 6 Cos.** are warned that the enemy's cavalry is advancing against our left flank.)

N.B. This warning, given by our commander, who can overlook the whole situation better than the skirmishers actually engaged with the enemy, will be amply sufficient to guide them, in connection with the nature of the ground and other circumstances, as to the most practical formation for receiving the attack.

Dispositions: 7 and 8 Cos. will *not* form square if the cavalry attacks.

The Squadron. Will attack the enemy's cavalry as soon as the latter is under fire of our infantry.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's cavalry attacks the left wing of our skirmishers with one squadron in extended order, and **7 Co.** with about half a squadron, keeping the other half squadron back on the right: meanwhile the enemy's infantry increases its fire to the utmost.

The enemy's cavalry cannot break our infantry, and retires hastily.

Dispositions:

The Squadron. Advances, half a squadron pursuing the enemy's cavalry. Our commander determines to take advantage of this period, in which the enemy's cavalry is unable immediately to support its infantry, for an attack on the latter. (The commandant of **2 Bat.**, the captains and two division leaders of both **5 and 6 Cos.**, fall out.)

Dispositions:

2 Bat. **5 and 6 Cos.** attack as soon as **7 Co.** reaches the line of skirmishers. **7 Co.** advances and joins in the attack. **8 Co.** follows in reserve at 300 paces distance.

½ 1 Bat. Attacks upon the signal to do so being given.

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The Squadron. Rallies on the left of the reserve (**8 Co.**), covers the left flank during the attack, and itself charges as soon as the enemy attempts a counter-stroke.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

Some of the enemy's skirmishers show an inclination to retreat, individuals quitting the line and going to the rear.

As soon as **7 Co.** has reached the skirmishing line,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy quits his position in a great hurry under cover of a company which has taken post so as to enfilade the left wing of the assailants; the portion of the enemy's cavalry which has been rallied moves against our left flank.

Signals: 'The Whole Halt.' 'Form Rallying Squares.'

The Squadron. Charges.

N.B. Only the portions of the skirmishing line which are actually attacked run into square.

Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 8.)

The enemy's cavalry has not done us much harm, and is pursued to some distance by our squadron; meanwhile, however, his infantry has time to regain its proper line of retreat and to reach a good defensive position.

(Two division leaders of **8 Co.** fall out.)

Dispositions:

2 Bat. **7 and 8 Cos.** each extends two divisions, which change front half left, advance 300 paces, then halt.

The Squadron. Assembles on the left rear of the position just taken up, leaving patrols to watch the enemy.

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Fig. 6.

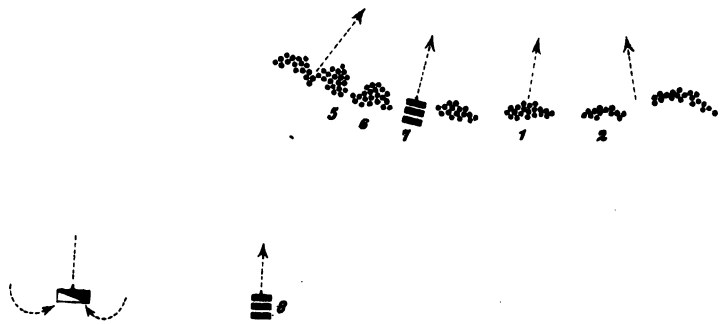

Fig. 7.

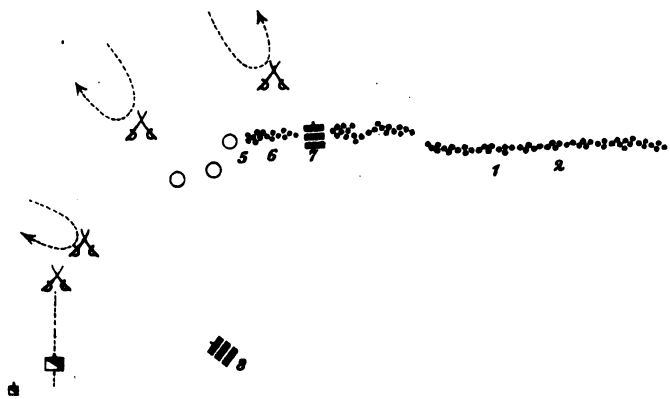

Fig. 8.

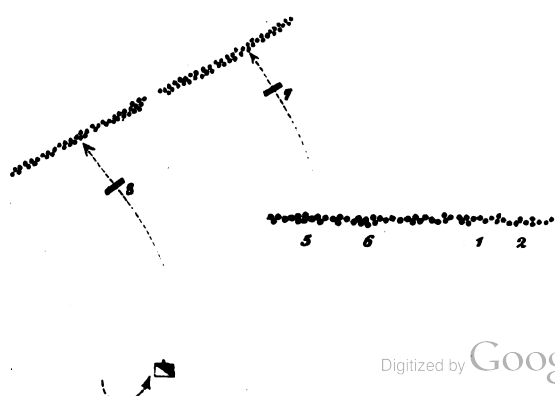

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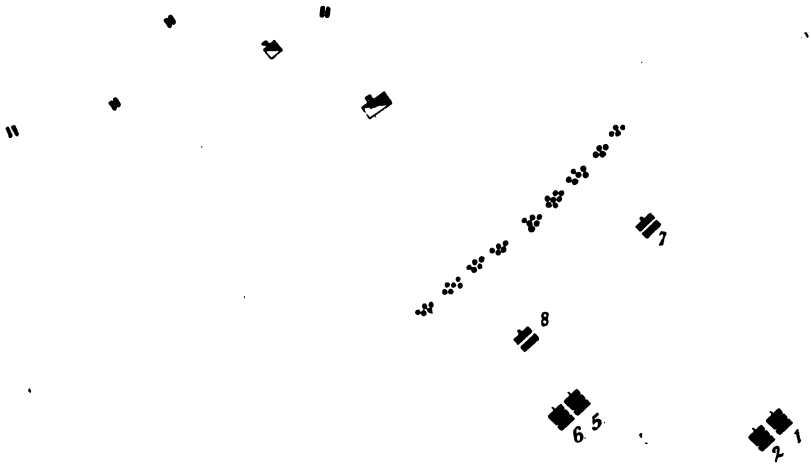
Fig. 9.



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Tenth Period.

(*Fig.* 9.)

The enemy occupies a favourable position more to the rear, and seems inclined to hold it.

Our detachment receives orders to advance no further, and to observe the enemy.

Dispositions:

The Squadron. Takes post in front of **7 and 8 Cos.**

2 Bat. **7 and 8 Cos.** each leaves one division extended. **5 and 6 Cos.** assemble 300 paces in rear of the left flank of **7 and 8 Cos.**

½ 1 Bat. Assembles 600 paces in rear of the centre.

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35th EXAMPLE.

1½ BATTALIONS (6 COMPANIES) AND 2 SQUADRONS, AGAINST 1 BATTALION 1 SQUADRON AND 2 GUNS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

Our detachment, having the larger force of cavalry, will be able, in spite of the enemy's artillery, to gain early information of his position and strength, or of the direction of his march, as it will have the power of driving back his reconnoitring and covering parties; it will, moreover, force him to unmask his artillery quickly. The following will be the principles of action: in the early part of the fight to occupy the enemy's artillery as much as possible, so as to facilitate our advance in a decisive direction; later on to use a small portion of our infantry, supported by some cavalry, in keeping up a heavy fire upon that part of the enemy's force which cannot be directly assailed, viz. the artillery; at the final crisis to use as much cavalry as we can dispose of, both to make the most of a successful attack of our infantry, and to make head against any attempt at a counter-stroke.

Our detachment is employed in covering the left flank of a larger body of troops; one squadron furnishes the advanced and the left flanking patrols; one squadron and two companies form the support and left flanking party; **2 Bat.** forms the main body.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

Our scouts signal the approach of a column of the enemy on our left flank.

Signal: '**The Whole Halt.**'

Dispositions:

The Cavalry. Both squadrons move to the left to reconnoitre.

2 Bat. Takes ground to the left in company columns; **5 Co.** extends; **6 Co.** follows by divisions in support; **7 and 8 Cos.** form the main body.

½ 1 Bat. Follows in reserve behind the right wing, and overlapping it.

Second Period.

The enemy opens fire with two guns upon the main body of our detachment (**2 Bat.**).

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35th Example.

Fig. 1.

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Fig. 2.

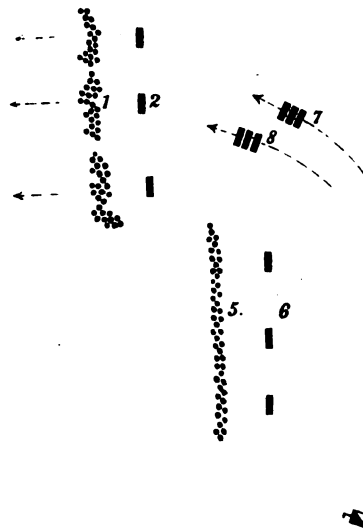
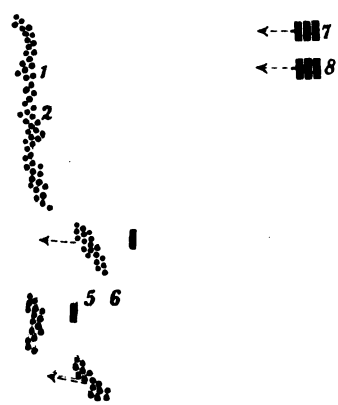


Fig. 3.



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We have as yet received no report of the enemy's strength and position.

Dispositions:

The Infantry. Stands fast.

The Cavalry. Moves quickly forward to ascertain the enemy's strength.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy shows about one battalion, one squadron, and two guns. His skirmishers have extended under cover and are firing at long range; his guns are in position behind his right flank.

Our commander determines to attack the enemy's left wing.

Dispositions:

½ 1 Bat. Advances to attack the enemy's left wing, forming the first line; one company extended, one company in support.

2 Bat. Also attacks the enemy's left wing; **7 and 8 Cos.** move up as main body in rear of **½ 1 Bat.** as soon as the latter advances; **5 and 6 Cos.** stand fast for the present.

The Cavalry. Joins in the general attack; as soon as our right wing advances it goes slowly to the rear, one and a half squadron on the right and half a squadron on the left flank.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy has three companies and some cavalry on his left; the two guns, one company, and also some cavalry form his right wing, which is refused.

Dispositions:

The Combined Bat. The skirmishers advance by successive rushes to within 500 paces of the enemy; supports reinforce the skirmishers.

½ 2 Bat. Moves up in line with the **Combined Bat.** as soon as the latter has taken post, one division being sent forward on the left flank to fire upon the enemy's guns.

The Cavalry. Is distributed behind each flank at 400 paces distance.

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Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy's skirmishers are reinforced and keep up a heavy fire with good effect.

Dispositions:

The Combined Bat. The main body halts, taking cover or lying down; the right skirmishing line is reinforced by two divisions, which are thrown forward offensively.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's guns fire with good effect upon our right wing.

Until the enemy's artillery is driven away it is not possible for us to advance to the attack.

Dispositions:

½ 2 Bat. The left wing moves forward by divisions, throwing forward the left in such manner as to fire upon the enemy's artillery and also to take his infantry in flank.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy's artillery is forced to draw back a little, and afterwards to retire altogether.

Dispositions:

The Combined Bat. Advances to the attack, the main body moving forward; cavalry shows itself behind the enemy's left wing.

½ 2 Bat. Stands fast during the attack.

The Cavalry. That of the right wing follows the advancing infantry, keeping the enemy's cavalry in view.

As soon as the main body has got up to the line of skirmishers,

Signal: 'Advance.'

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy abandons his position before we come to close quarters, his squadron showing front to cover the retreat of the infantry.

Signal: 'Advance Quickly.'

Dispositions:

The Cavalry. If it has not already advanced, does so, and charges.

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Fig. 4.

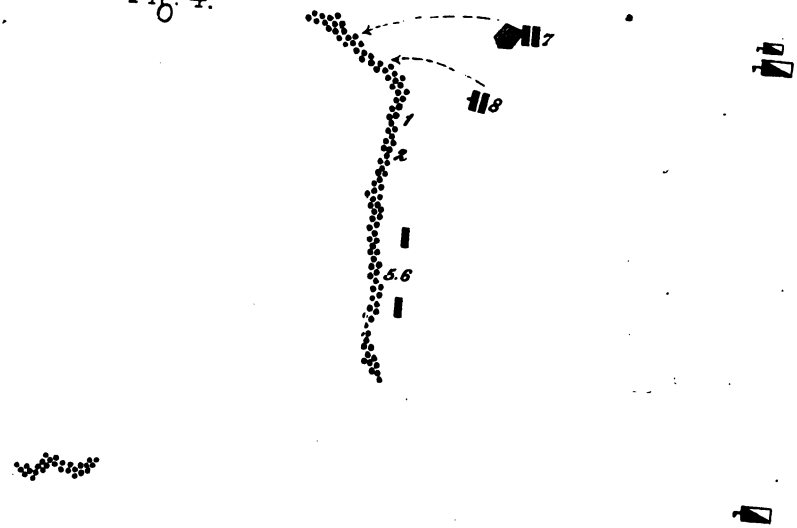

Fig. 5.

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Fig. 6.

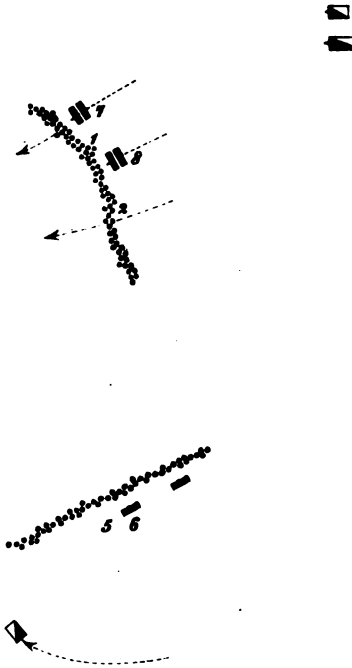
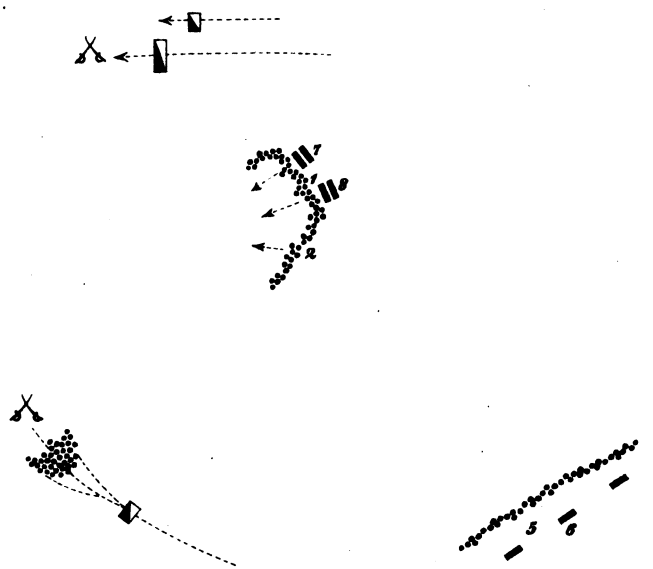


Fig. 7.



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Ninth Period.

The enemy pursues his retreat without halting.

Dispositions:

The Combined Bat. 7 and 8 Cos. form the advanced body of our detachment, which resumes its march in the original direction.

½ 1 & ½ 2 Bat. Follow as main body at 600 paces distance.

The Cavalry. Pursues the retreating enemy for the present with one squadron, the other squadron marching at the head of the infantry.

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36th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

When a detachment is engaged as part of a larger body of troops, those considerations with reference to its own line of retreat and that of the enemy, also to the necessity of keeping a reserve in hand, which prevailed when it was acting in a more independent manner, will cease to have influence. The principal difference to be observed between the conduct of a detachment acting independently, and of one acting in combination with a larger body of troops, is as follows: that the former has to work out all the different stages of an action, including the *Reconnoissance*, the *Introduction*, the *Prosecution*, the *Crisis*, and the *Conclusion*; whilst the latter neither will, nor as a general rule can, be employed at the outside in more than two of these phases, which are generally distinctly defined when forces of considerable strength are engaged. For instance, a battalion in brigade, which has been employed in the *Introduction*, will at the outside be further used only in the *Prosecution*, hardly ever in the *Crisis*, and never in the *Conclusion*; whilst, on the other hand, a battalion or regiment to which is assigned the duty of making the decisive attack will certainly never be employed in opening the battle. The principles, however, which should govern our action during these main phases of an important battle are so very different, that troops must be thoroughly trained in working them out, so as to be able to do so in harmony with the general idea of the commander.

A regiment employed in opening a fight must act in a different manner from one which has to give the decisive blow. Whilst the former feels the enemy at all points, and, so to say, questions with its fire energetically, and yet with a certain reserve, for the purpose of finding out from whence the answer comes, and of deceiving the adversary as to the intended point of attack, the prosecution of the combat will be confined within more certain limits, already marked out by what has gone before; and lastly, at the critical moment, the exertions of the combatants will be concentrated within still narrower bounds. In order that we may be prepared for the battle field, where time, space, and—danger interfere with detailed instructions, or simply make them impossible, it is necessary that every commander of a detachment should know for what stage of the fight the troops under his orders are intended, and the latter must be thoroughly trained in carrying out the principles suitable to that stage.

Our regiment (2 battalions) forms the left wing of a brigade deployed.

1 Bat. (first line) has two companies pushed forward, one division of each extended, the other two companies remaining in line 200 paces to the rear.

2 Bat. (second line) in company columns at full interval, 600 paces in rear of the skirmishing line, its left flank covering on that of the latter.

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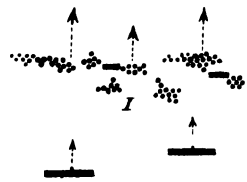
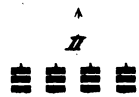
36th Example.

Fig. 1.



First line of the Brigade.



II. Second line.

Reserve.

Fig. 2.

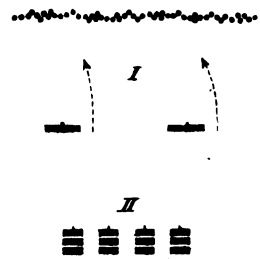
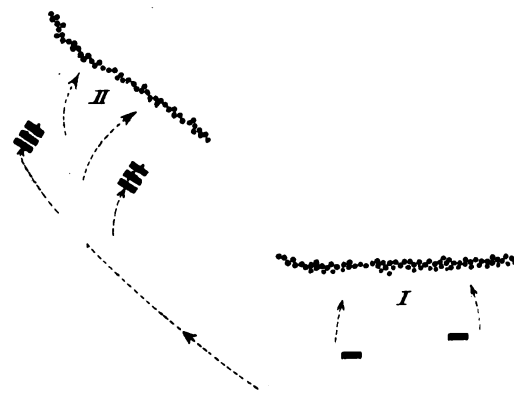


Fig. 3



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On the right of our regiment is another regiment (2 battalions), with one battalion in first line and one in second line; a third regiment (2 battalions) follows as reserve behind the right wing of the brigade; a battery has taken post on the right; some cavalry secures our left flank; the whole force is advancing; the brigade attacks a position occupied by the enemy.

(This position of the brigade should be slightly marked.)

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy opens a steady skirmishing fire at a distance of from 800 to 900 paces.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Supports join the skirmishing line, then advance by successive divisions to within 400 paces of the enemy, up to which point only individual firing and group volleys by word of command are allowed.

2 Bat. Continues to advance.

(All mounted officers in the first line will dismount, on principle; each captain may keep a couple of smart men belonging to his company about him as orderlies; the battalion commandant may in like manner retain a man (a one-year volunteer) from each company for the same purpose.)

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's infantry fire gets hotter and hotter; his artillery acts principally against the right wing of our brigade.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. The skirmishing line is reinforced by a division from each company of the first line.

2 Bat. Approaches to within 400 paces of the skirmishing line, then halts, taking cover or lying down.

(It must be understood once for all that, whenever a detachment halts, the men will take cover or lie down.)

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy appears to be drawing detachments from his right wing (that opposed to our regiment) towards his left wing.

Our brigadier sends orders for the regiment 'to act vigorously against the enemy's right wing, and to hold it in check, so that no reinforcements may be sent from thence to the left wing, which four battalions of our brigade will meanwhile attack'

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Dispositions:

1 Bat. The skirmishers are reinforced by two more divisions from the first line.

2 Bat. Advances quickly 200 paces beyond the left flank of **1 Bat.** (to a point which must be indicated), then throws forward its left, and extends two companies, which open a flanking fire on the enemy's right wing.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

We see that the enemy is pushing forward some detachments which were in rear of his right wing into the skirmishing line, so as to meet our flank attack.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances by successive divisions up to the right flank of **2 Bat.**

2 Bat. One company from the main body takes ground to the left, and extends two divisions, which prolong the line of skirmishers to the left, throwing forward their own left offensively.

Fifth Period.

The enemy has withdrawn the artillery of his left wing a little way.

Our brigadier sends the following order: 'The regiment will detach one battalion to take part in the attack made by the right wing of the brigade.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Stands fast during the general attack, reinforces the skirmishing line, and increases its fire to the utmost.

1 Bat. Advances towards the line A—B (to be marked on the ground) as soon as the general attack is commenced.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy sends some more small reinforcements up to his right wing skirmishers.

The brigadier gives the signal for the general advance.

Signals: 'The Whole Advance.' Then **'Advance Quickly.'**

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Fig.4.

Fig.5.

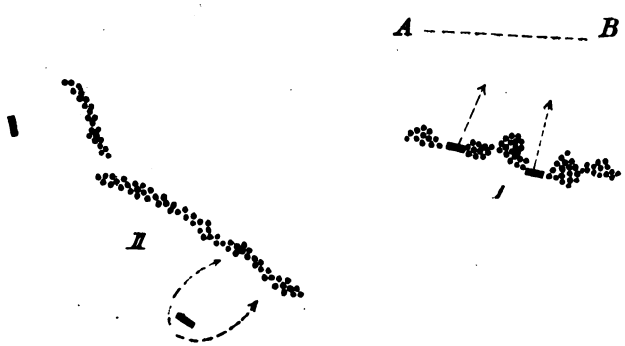

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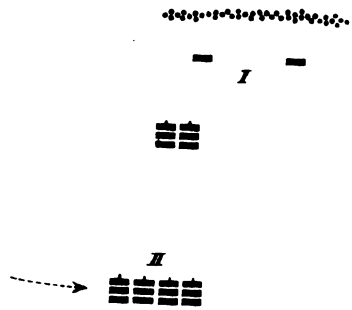
Fig. 6.



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Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy has withdrawn hurriedly before we can get to close quarters, and is now occupying, with some supports, a favourable defensive position more to the rear.

As soon as **1 Bat.** has reached the position which it was ordered to attack,

Signal: 'Halt.'

Our brigadier sends the following order: 'The regiment will occupy with a small force the position which it has carried, the rest of the regiment remaining in reserve; the brigade will continue the attack.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Two companies occupy the position taken from the enemy; the other two companies remain in close order behind the left flank.

2 Bat. Forms line of contiguous company columns 300 paces behind the left wing of **1 Bat.**

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37th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

The portion of a considerable body of troops on the offensive which is intrusted with the *Introduction* of a combat has first of all to take hold of the enemy along his whole front, so as to be able to make out how he has disposed his forces. The next and still more important task for troops engaged in the *Introduction* of an offensive action will be to deceive the enemy as to the intended point of attack, and to induce him to concentrate his forces prematurely or in a false direction. The troops to whom this introductory stage of the combat is intrusted must, however, on no account allow themselves to be carried away into converting the *Introduction* at any point into actual *Prosecution*, because by doing so they might either, if left to themselves, suffer a check, or if, to save them from this they were reinforced from the main body, the attack would be diverted to a different direction from that originally intended, and probably to one not so favourable to the assailant. A detachment intended for the introductory phase of a combat must therefore develop itself laterally as much as possible, approaching at the same time near enough to the enemy's position for its fire to take effect upon the defenders, and to force them to make some defensive movements. If after this first stage of the battle, viz. the *Introduction*, the commanding officer is able to decide upon the proper line of attack, and if he makes this known to the troops engaged in the introductory combat, they must, with energy and yet without committing themselves too far, threaten some other point which would appear for tactical reasons to be in a probable direction of attack, thus keeping the enemy as long as possible in uncertainty as to our actual object.

Our regiment forms the main body of an advanced guard; our advanced body is already engaged with the enemy's outposts; our scouts have come upon the enemy in position on a front of about 800 paces to the left front of the road on which we are marching.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

Our regiment comes under heavy artillery fire.

The commander of the advanced guard orders 'the regiment to despatch one battalion to the left of the road; this battalion to extend a strong body of skirmishers and to advance against the enemy's position; the second battalion to follow in close order on both sides of the road.' Just as this order arrived the artillery of the advanced guard, which had been reinforced, came into action 1,500 paces to the left rear of our regiment.

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37th Example.

Fig. 1.

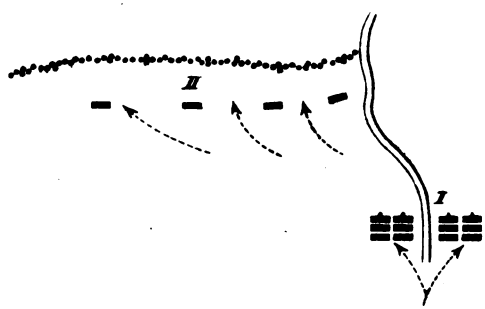

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Fig. 2.

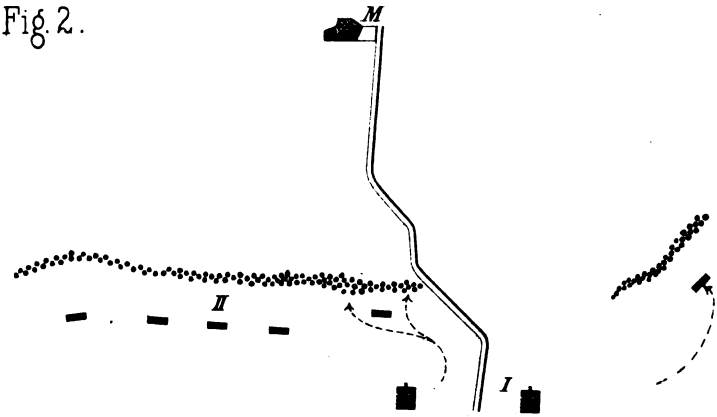


Fig. 3.

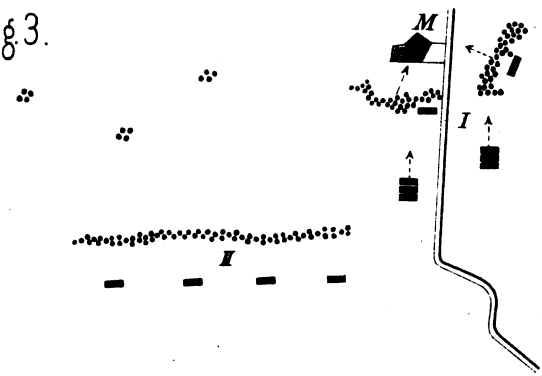
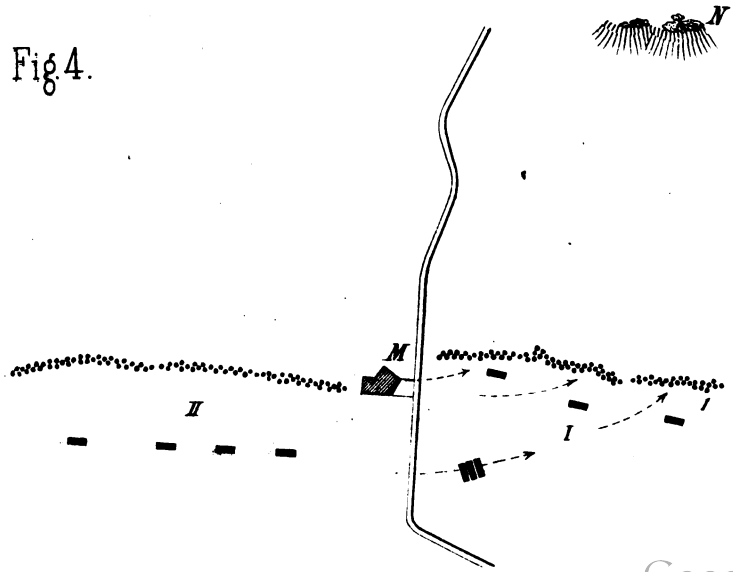


Fig. 4.



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Dispositions:

2 Bat. Forms line of company columns at double interval on the left of the road, each company sending out two divisions to skirmish, with the men widely extended.
The whole advance.

1 at. Follows, having a half battalion on each side of the road, 300 paces in rear of the other battalion.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy opens a smart fire against our advancing skirmishers, particularly from a point M close on the left of the road (farm-house, ditch, a small wood, or such like).

Dispositions:

1 Bat. One company of the right half-battalion extends so as to turn the point M by the right.
One company of the left half-battalion extends to attack the same point in front.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

Whilst the troops which are opposed to our **2 Bat.** retire slowly and firing, those occupying point M still offer a stout resistance.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Halts, sending out patrols to follow the enemy.

1 Bat. Attacks, and carries point M.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy has evacuated his advanced post with pretty considerable loss, and retreats to another point, N, 700 paces farther to the rear, and to the right of the road (farm-building or such like).

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Continues to advance in the same line with **1 Bat.**

1 Bat. Draws off entirely to the right of the road, prolonging its line to the right, one company kept in rear in close order.

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Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

We now make out that the enemy occupies a position on both sides of the road, his left flank resting on the point N, which appears to be strongly occupied.

The following order is received: 'The brigade will attack the right wing of the enemy with five battalions; the regiment will retain its present position, strengthening its right wing and keeping the enemy opposed to it in play.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. The company next the road assembles and moves to the right of the road behind **1 Bat.**

1 Bat. As soon as the company from **2 Bat.** has arrived, the company remaining in close order moves up to reinforce the right wing, extending two divisions.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy opens an extremely heavy fire against the right wing of our regiment.

The main body of our brigade has in its forward movement passed beyond the left flank of our regiment.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. The left flank company closes and moves to the right of the road, and takes post close to it.

1 Bat. Throws its right forward so as to bring a flanking fire to bear upon point N.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

We remark that the enemy is moving some troops from his advanced post N away to his right flank.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances by successive divisions against N.

2 Bat. One company moves behind the right wing of **1 Bat.**, following its advance.

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 8.)

As soon as the enemy remarks the advance of **1 Bat.** he puts a stop to the movement towards his right wing, and receives our battalion with an extremely heavy fire.

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Fig. 5.

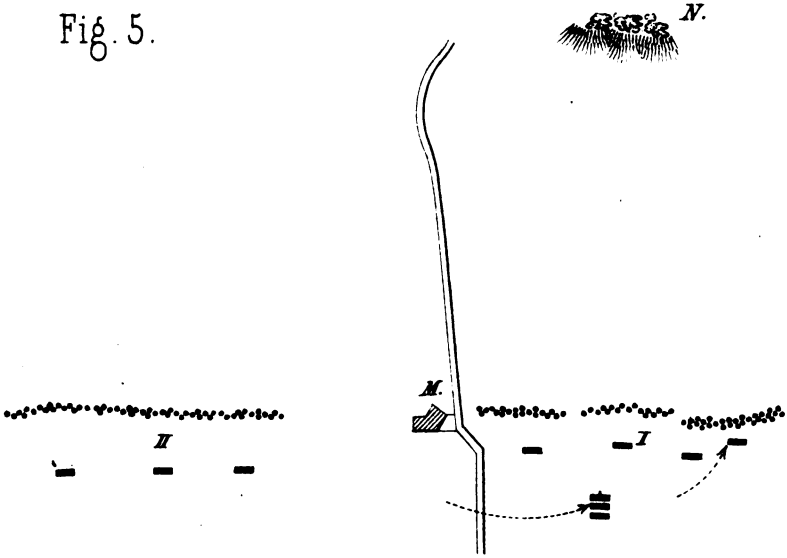


Fig. 6.

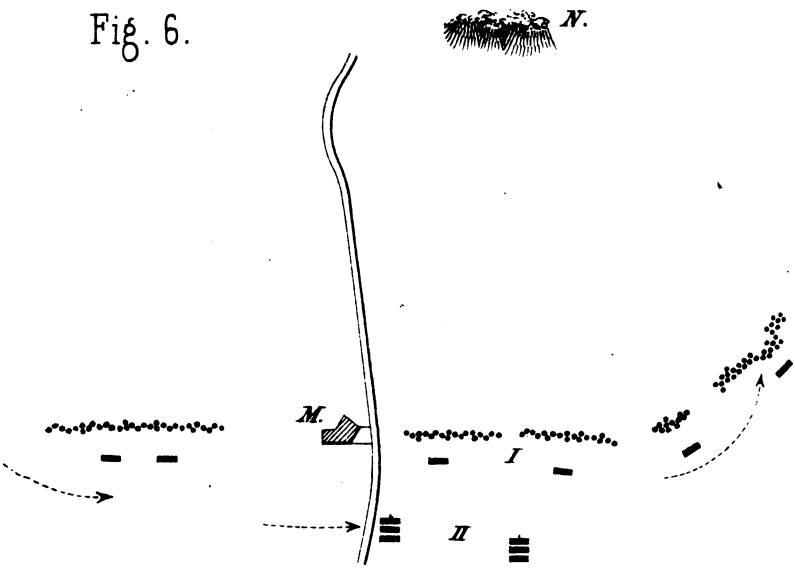
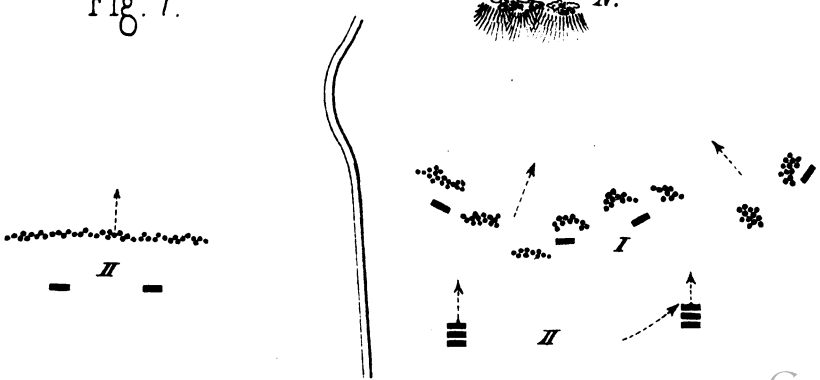


Fig. 7.



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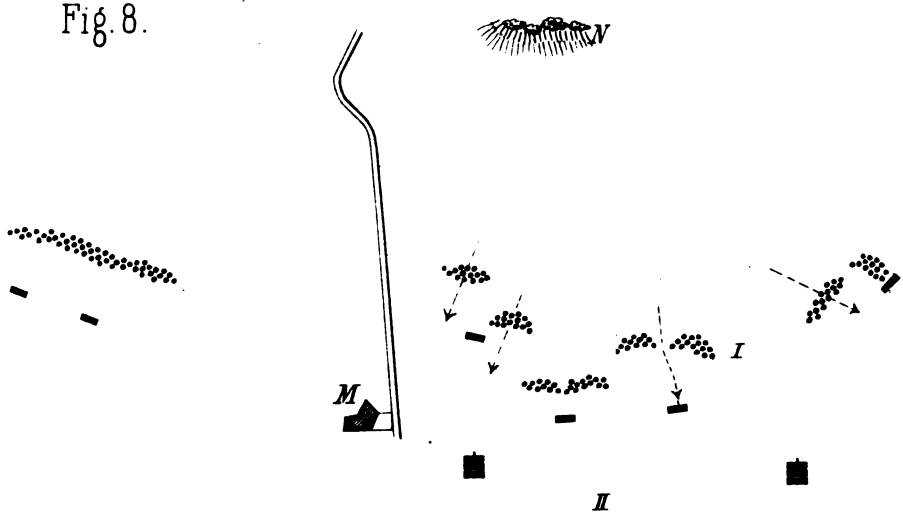

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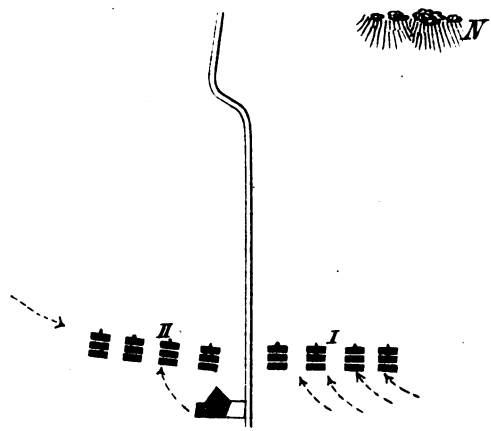

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Dispositions:

1 Bat. Halts, then retires quickly by successive divisions to their last position.

2 Bat. Halts.

Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 9.)

Meanwhile the right wing of the enemy's main body is compelled to retire, which movement his left wing and the detachment occupying point N conform to leisurely.

Our regiment receives the order 'Assemble and follow the brigade in reserve on both sides of the road.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. On the right of the road in line of company columns.

2 Bat. In the same formation on the left of the road.

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38th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

The troops which are intended for the *Prosecution* of the attack, the direction of which has been determined upon after the experience gained in the introductory stage of the combat, will, contrary to what has been done in the case of the troops employed in the *Introduction*, be formed more in depth than in breadth. The front therefore allowed for a battalion should, if possible, not exceed 300 paces. Whilst during the *Introduction* as large a part of the enemy's front line as possible must be brought under fire and held in play, during the *Prosecution*, on the contrary, fire must be concentrated upon a comparatively small portion of that front, that is to say, upon the actual point which it is intended to assault, and the said fire must be increased to the utmost by the reserves which, thanks to the formation in depth, can be gradually brought up for the purpose.

As soon as a point suitable for the attack has been made out by the troops engaged in the *Introduction*, the detachment intended for the *Prosecution* will be brought up in the formation offering the smallest possible mark for artillery fire; a strong line of skirmishers with supports forming the *Advanced body* (or first line), which has to *prepare* the attack; the smaller part of the remaining force following close behind the advanced body in second line, to fill up quickly any gaps which may be made in the skirmishing line; the larger portion as *Main body* from 300 to 400 paces in rear. The last-named body will from the first be directed towards where, later on, the main attack will be made.

The advanced body will move forward in one line until the enemy's infantry fire begins to tell in earnest, after which its fractions will move by successive rushes up to within 400 or 500 paces of the enemy's skirmishers, if possible even nearer to them; it will then establish itself firmly and bring up reinforcements. Now begins the period during which the enemy must be, both materially and morally, so much shaken by our powerful and well-directed fire that he either is unable to offer to our final assault any serious material resistance (that is to say, cannot bring a superior fire to bear upon us), or he no longer feels the moral strength within himself to dare to the utmost, and therefore shrinks from meeting us at close quarters.

The main body and advanced body (supports and skirmishing line) must at the moment of the assault advance in one body on the enemy's position, and there halt.

We should here mention as a peculiarity of this same stage of the *Prosecution*, both because it is characteristic and much to be observed in our peace training, that when once the different sections of our force (Advanced body, Second line, Main body) are engaged in the actual stage of *Prosecution*, it will be only possible to dispose of them otherwise under peculiarly favourable local conditions, and that it will be better to continue the attack with all energy, even if the direction be found not altogether favourable, than to alter our dispositions when within from 500 to 700 paces of the enemy's front line.

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Dispositions:

2 Bat. Hurries forward 300 paces at a run, then advances by successive rushes; supports join the skirmishing line.

1 Bat. The company which has been pushed forward (second line) forms skirmishing groups; the battalion continues to move on.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The advanced body has got nearly to within 400 paces of the enemy's skirmishers, who open an extremely sharp fire.

The advanced body (**2 Bat.**) has brought its supports up to the skirmishing line.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Halts; the advanced company (second line) moves forward to reinforce the right wing of the skirmishers.

Fifth Period.

The enemy has again reinforced the skirmishers opposed to our regiment; our brigade battery has moved up to closer quarters, and is keeping up a heavy fire at short range on the point to be assailed.

(The commandant of **2 Bat.**, two captains, and five division leaders of the same battalion fall out.)

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances to attack.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

We remark some confusion amongst the enemy, whose fire slackens.

As soon as **1 Bat.** has got up to the skirmishing line,

Signals: 'Advance.' Then **'Advance Quickly.'**

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy has not waited for us to close upon him, and has commenced a hasty retreat towards a position farther to the rear.

As soon as the line A—B evacuated by the enemy has been reached,

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Extends and commences rapid independent firing.

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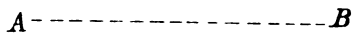

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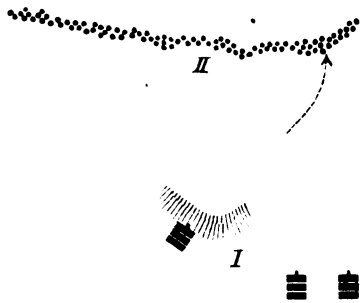

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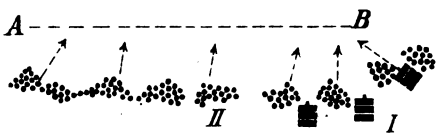

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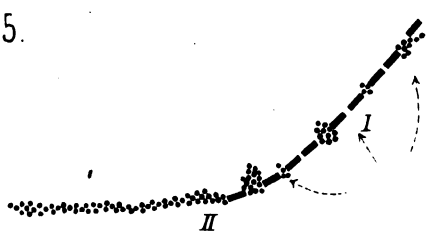

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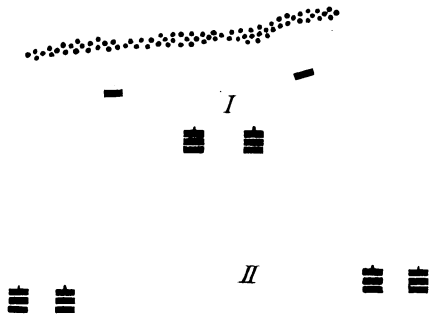

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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy has been rallied in his retreat by fresh troops. The order is given for 'the regiment to occupy at once the position which it has carried.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Occupies the line A—B; two companies in first line, two companies in second line.

2 Bat. Takes post as reserve with a half-battalion behind each flank at 400 paces distance from the first line.

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39th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

Defensive dispositions, in order to be correct, must include the idea of taking the offensive at the moment in which the assailant, with forces disordered by the losses which are the necessary consequence of his attack, arrives at the point of assault, or is arrested in his movement before reaching it.

All proper dispositions for attack must be based upon the idea of a counter-stroke such as above suggested, and therefore troops must be kept in hand to oppose it. When the counter-stroke has been repulsed, or should it not take place at all (as will often be the case), or again should it be made at the wrong moment, the troops kept in hand to oppose it may be at once employed for the farther prosecution of the attack, and especially for making full use of any advantage gained.

As the flanks of the assailant are the points especially exposed to the attacks of the defender, the former will keep the troops intended to oppose these sallies behind one or both flanks, and in greater force behind that most exposed to attack and where a check would be of most consequence.

This so-called *reserve* must follow the attacking lines in such a formation as to offer as small a mark as possible to the enemy's artillery, whilst at the same time it is kept thoroughly in hand, for its commander cannot know beforehand either in what direction or against what arm and what amount of force it may be called upon to act, or indeed whether it may not at once be actively employed in the attack.

Two battalions of a brigade have commenced the fight; three battalions are intended to *prosecute* the attack, and are formed 600 paces in front of our regiment, divided into an advanced and main body;* our regiment stands in contiguous company columns without any interval between battalions.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy is still engaged in skirmishing with the battalions employed in the *introduction* of the combat.

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* This main body at least must be slightly marked, as must the enemy in this and in all other examples.

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39th Example.

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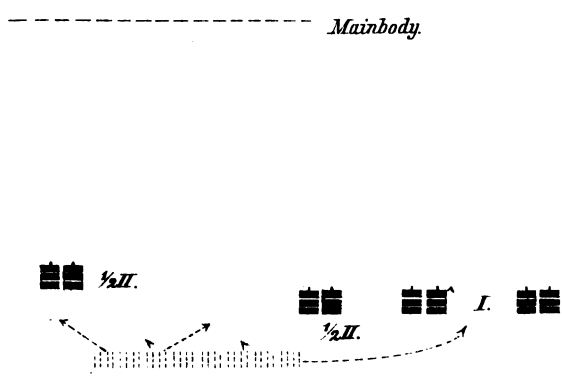

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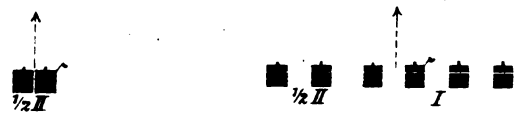
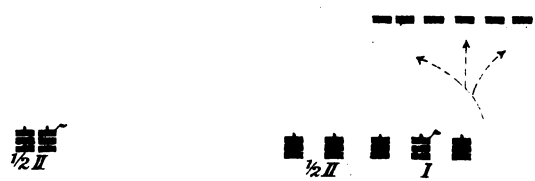


Fig 3.



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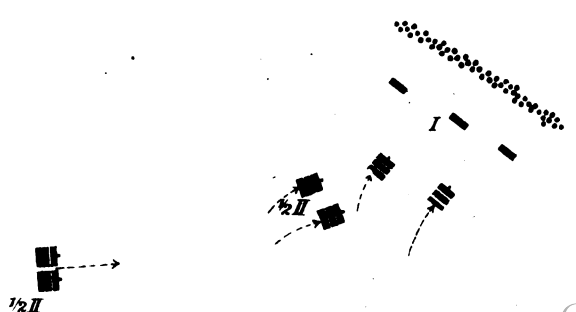

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The following order comes from our brigadier: 'The regiment will follow the three battalions told off for the attack, in reserve; main force on the right.'

The following order is addressed to the battalion commandants and captains: 'The regiment will form the third line (reserve) at the commencement of the attack; the right wing will be strengthened.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Follows behind the right wing of the main body in line of half-battalions at full interval.

2 Bat. One half-battalion joins **1 Bat.**, moving in line with it at full interval; the other half-battalion follows the left wing of the main body.

The whole advance.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The first line of the three attacking battalions is already hotly engaged; a part of the enemy's artillery directs its fire against the right wing of our regiment.

Dispositions:

Right Wing.

1 & ½ 2 Bat. Deploy into line of company columns.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The first line of the attacking battalions has advanced to within 400 paces of the enemy, whose fire is increased to the utmost.

The commander of the attacking regiment sends word that he is on the point of ordering his main body to reinforce the first line.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. One company advances in line of half divisions; the whole force keeps moving on.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy quits his position; considerable bodies of infantry show themselves on his left, advancing quickly against the right flank of our attacking battalions.

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Dispositions:

1 Bat. Changes front half-right (towards an object indicated or the marked enemy): one company extended, one company in support. The whole advance.

2 Bat. Assembles quickly in rear of the right of **1 Bat.**

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy receives the advancing regiment with a heavy fire.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances 200 paces farther, to a point indicated, and halts. Supports reinforce skirmishers. Another company moves out in support.

2 Bat. Will attack as soon as it is assembled.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy stops his forward movement, but holds fast to a position which takes our brigade in flank.

As soon as **2 Bat.** has formed line of company columns at full interval in rear of the right wing,

Dispositions:

2 Bat. At once attacks E (an object indicated). It is not necessary to keep any part of it in reserve.

1 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

As soon as the enemy remarks the movement of **2 Bat.** against E he retires from thence; at the same time, however, some of his squadrons are seen to be advancing.

Signal: 'Halt.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Prepares for cavalry.

2 Bat. Is warned of the approach of cavalry.

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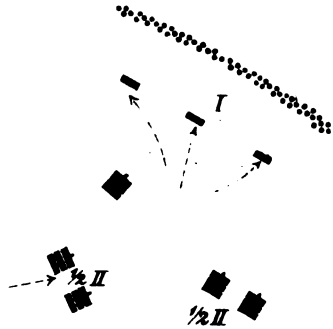
Fig 5.



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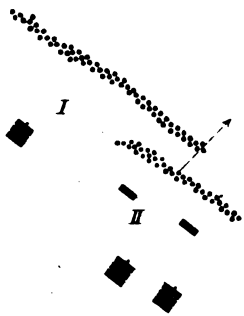

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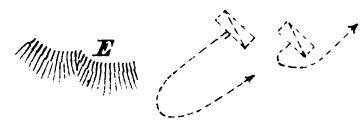

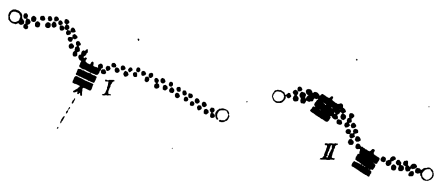

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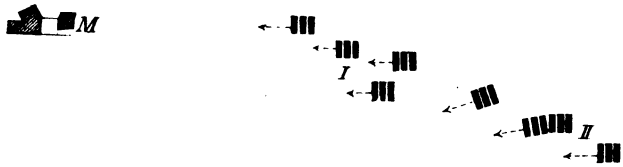

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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 8.)

The enemy's cavalry has only feigned an attack, and withdraws as soon as his infantry has effected its retreat.

Our brigadier sends the following order: 'The regiment will move off to the left as far as M, there to remain in reserve; all possible expedition will be used.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Moves off towards M, assembling on the march; on arriving at M forms line of contiguous company columns.

2 Bat. Moves off towards M, forming line of contiguous company columns in rear of **1 Bat.**

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40th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

If we have succeeded in driving the enemy out of his position, the troops which have been engaged in the decisive assault will generally have reached the point to be assailed in such a condition as to be for the moment unfit for any systematic employment. Many officers and non-commissioned officers who had run on in front of their men have been killed or wounded; the tactical units themselves have been jumbled up together on coming into collision with the foe, certain groups and divisions having pressed forward with too much ardour, whilst other smaller portions have perhaps at the critical moment been too much inclined to hang back; in short, the more dearly the victory has been bought the greater will be the disorder of the victor's forces. He has the advantage, however, of the moral superiority and of the most thorough development of fire; on the other hand, the defeated enemy retains the power of bringing a very strong fire to bear, and possesses in all probability *Reserves* which will at least rally the broken troops, even if they are too weak to make a counter attack or have missed the right moment for doing so.

If the conqueror after his successful attack gives up the advantage of superior fire and allows himself to be carried away by his moral superiority into pursuing the attack, his action will become more or less disunited, his fractions will act for themselves, and all general direction will cease. If at such a moment fresh troops come into action on the enemy's side and are conducted systematically, even though they may not give him a superiority of numbers it will very likely be found that the moral superiority of the assailants, deprived as they are of general direction, will be shattered against this material obstacle; in other words, the sort of pursuit supposed, that is to say the continuation of the attack, will end as follows: the assailants will be checked, will halt, and finally give way. Their repulse will probably cause the loss of all that has been before gained. On this account after every successful attack let us halt and establish ourselves firmly in the position which we have carried, pursuing the enemy with rapid independent fire and then restoring order amongst our own people. It will fall to the lot of our *Reserve* (third line) to take full advantage of our victory by gaining as much ground as possible and by pursuing the attack, which has now become a much easier task. This *Reserve* has, as already mentioned in the last example, first of all to parry the counter attack which may be expected from every defence properly conducted, and secondly, should this either not be made by the enemy or be easily repulsed by our people, to take the utmost advantage of our success, that is to say, to undertake the pursuit. The conduct of the troops told off for this service will be regulated by very different principles to those which govern the action of detachments engaged in

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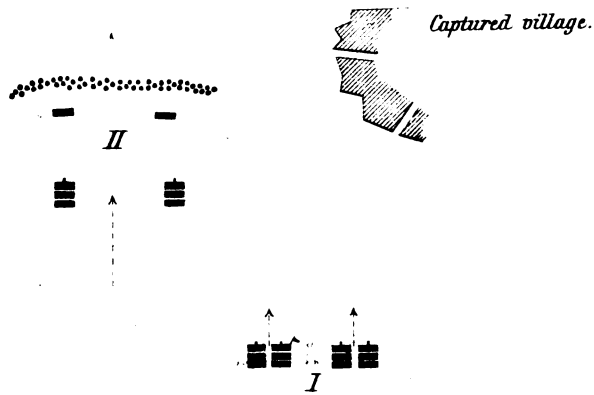
40th Example.

Fig. 1.



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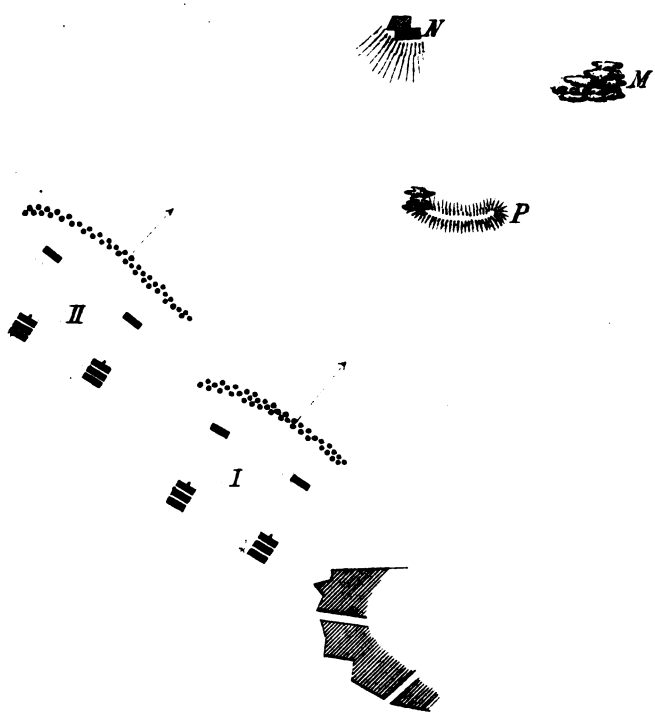

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the *Introduction* or *Prosecution* of the fight, for in the first place the pursuer has before him an enemy whose morale has been seriously affected, and that portion of his force which has rallied the broken troops will probably now only remain on the defensive, having missed the moment for offensive action; but even if they should move forward to attack they will meet with opponents as fresh as themselves systematically led and encouraged by success. Therefore the following principles will hold good for the troops told off to pursue. Push constantly forward; keep up your fire (even whilst advancing); keep back a few small bodies in close order for the purpose of quickly overcoming the resistance of any parties of the enemy who may be left behind; regulate the advance of the principal sub-units by indicating certain objects easily recognised.

The regiment is advancing in reserve, overlapping the left wing of the brigade at 600 paces distance from the first line; it is formed in line of half-battalions at full interval; the left wing of the brigade has just stormed a hamlet occupied by the enemy.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy is seen to be retiring in great disorder from the hamlet.

We receive the following order: 'The regiment will advance as quickly as possible beyond the village, pursue the enemy, and turn his right flank.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Advances at the double 300 paces beyond **1 Bat.**, then two companies extend, pursuing the broken enemy.

1 Bat. Also advances and joins in the pursuit.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy, who has been expelled from the village, seems determined to stand fast somewhat more to the rear; some troops in close order show themselves on his right.

As soon as **1 Bat.** has reached the farther side of the village,

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Two companies extend, change front half-right, taking the direction of M (a bush, farm-building, or any other point), moving up into line with **2 Bat.**

2 Bat. Changes front half-right, taking the direction of N, also an object to be indicated.

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Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

A part of the retreating enemy has occupied a point P in front of **1 Bat.**

Dispositions:

1 Bat. At once attacks point P.

2 Bat. Continues to advance.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy abandons P without awaiting the attack; some of his cavalry seem to be advancing against the left wing of our regiment.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Is warned of the approach of cavalry.

1 Bat. Is warned that cavalry threatens the left wing, but continues to advance on M.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy, having attacked **2 Bat.** with two squadrons, is repulsed with loss.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Halts until **2 Bat.** is again in line with it; the skirmishers are reinforced by one company; fire is concentrated against M.

2 Bat. Continues its advance as quickly as possible against N. (Both battalion commandants, together with two captains and five division leaders of each battalion, fall out.)

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The part of the enemy's forces which was driven out of the village continues its retreat, only some small detachments standing fast at M and N to cover this movement.

As soon as **2 Bat.** has come up in line with **1 Bat.**, or nearly so,

Signals: '**The Whole Advance.**' Then '**Advance Quickly.**'

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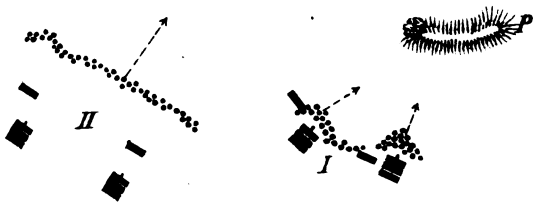
Fig. 3.



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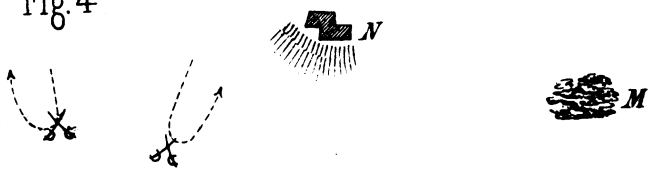

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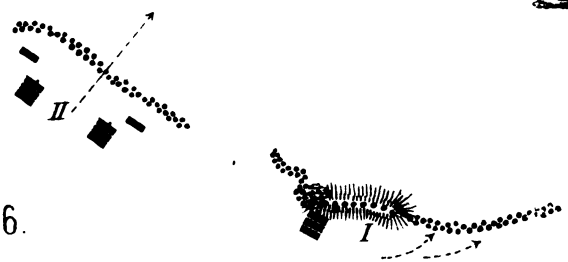

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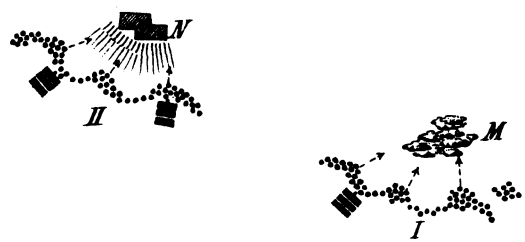

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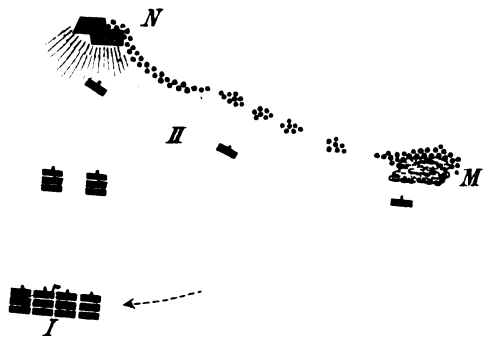

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Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy is driven with great loss from the points which he has last occupied.

We receive the following order: 'The regiment will stop its advance, and occupy the line between M and N.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Occupies the line M—N; one company extended, one in support, two as main body.

1 Bat. In reserve. Line of contiguous company columns 400 paces in rear of the left wing of **2 Bat.**

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41st EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS AND 1 SQUADRON IN BRIGADE (ON THE DEFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

It is only really dangerous to remain on the defensive when the force which does so, whether it be an army-corps or a battalion, is forced by the enemy to take that line against its will, having lost all initiative and being simply reduced to defend itself wherever the enemy chooses to attack it. For the defensive has its undoubted advantages when it has been chosen freely and with full knowledge by a commander, although these advantages have been contested of late years by writers of peculiar tendencies. All proper dispositions for defence will be based upon the principle of being prepared to assume the offensive at the moment in which the assailant, having suffered severe loss in vain attempts to carry the position of the defender, has become somewhat demoralised; at any rate, troops on the defensive must be ready to assume the initiative when the assailant is on the point of reaching their position, encouraged indeed by success, but thrown into disorder by the losses which he has sustained. The defender must make up his mind beforehand as to which point is most suitable for his counter-stroke with reference to the nature of the ground; his first great difficulty is to make sure of this; the next great difficulty will be to choose the right moment for the counter-stroke. To make time and place, the favourable point and right moment of attack fit in together, is what constitutes the real difficulty of conducting defensive operations and what makes them dangerous, the danger not being in the *Defensive* of itself, for considered in the abstract it must be materially stronger than the *Offensive*.

The commander of any body of troops, great or small, on the defensive, must base his dispositions upon the above-mentioned fundamental principle of being prepared to assume the offensive at the right moment, and if he has cavalry must then bring it into play.

In order to delay the enemy's advance to the utmost, the defender must make the greatest possible use of his firearms, bringing them to bear even at long distances (but always under control of the officers); as the enemy approaches the fire must be redoubled, so as to force the assailant to make his last halt before the decisive assault as far as possible from our position; lastly, troops must be kept in hand under cover and, if practicable, concealed from the view of the enemy, for the purpose of making the counter attack at the decisive moment.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the following principles

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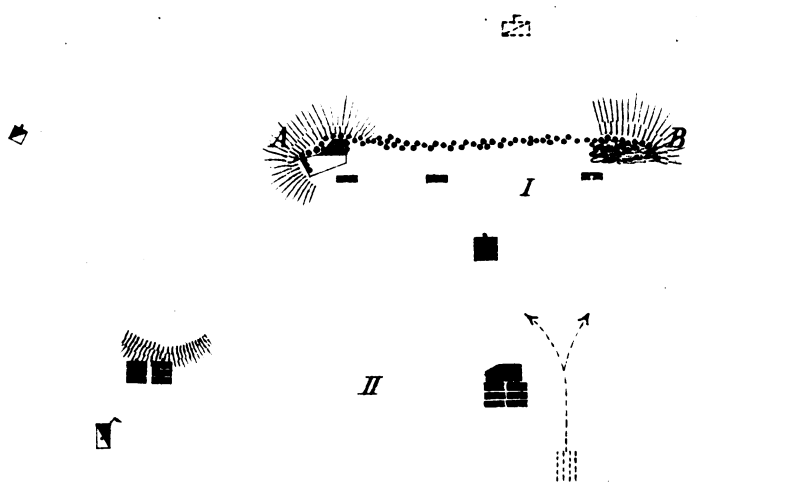
41st Example.

Fig. 1.



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should regulate the action of troops forming part of larger corps and told off to defend a position independently: formation in depth; a strong line of skirmishers with supports as first line; a second line in smaller force intended to fill up quickly any gaps in the first line, and to repair any breaches made by the enemy in their immediate neighbourhood by short sallies; lastly, a third line (reserve) for the great counter-stroke.

Our regiment has been told off to defend a portion of a position (to be marked) on the left flank of a brigade, and is supported by a squadron; on the right of our regiment two other battalions have been told off for the defence of another section of the position; two battalions are posted behind the centre of the brigade as general reserve; a battery and a second squadron are already in action on the right of the brigade. Our regiment is moving up in open column of divisions, **1 Bat.** in front, and has arrived within 600 paces of the line to be occupied; the squadron has been pushed forward about 800 paces.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The squadron comes under infantry fire; the enemy's skirmishers are visible at about 1,500 paces distance.

During the march the following caution is given to the commandants and captains: 'Our regiment has been told off to defend the line A—B (to be marked). A squadron of cavalry is co-operating with it.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Occupies the front of the position with three companies in first line and one company in second line.

2 Bat. As third line at 500 paces distance; one half-battalion in rear of the centre, the other half-battalion overlapping the left.

The Squadron. Assembles on the left rear of the third line as soon as the regiment is in position, one division being still left out in front.

The above orders are immediately executed.

Second Period.

The enemy now shows a widely extended skirmishing line, behind which we remark bodies in close order.

Dispositions:

Group volleys against the enemy's columns; independent firing by word of command.

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Third Period.

The enemy's skirmishers having been reinforced, advance to within 700 paces.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers; the company in second line is distributed by divisions along the skirmishing line at 100 paces distance.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy reinforces his right wing; his skirmishers advance by successive rushes.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Reinforces the left wing.

2 Bat. The right half-battalion takes ground to the left by companies or divisions and forms upon the left half-battalion, preparing for a counter attack.

The Squadron. Moves 300 paces farther to the rear.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

Detachments of the enemy in close order dash up behind his right wing which is working gradually round our left wing.

The brigadier gives the following order: 'The brigade will advance from the right with three battalions, the regiment continuing to hold its position.'

(The enemy's skirmishers are now about 500 paces from our own.)

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Throws back its left defensively; all supports join the skirmishing line.

2 Bat. One company extends to take the enemy's right wing in flank; the battalion then advances to attack.

The Squadron. Moves forward to charge as soon as **2 Bat.** attacks.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy forms a new line of skirmishers on his right to oppose the company of **2 Bat.** which is taking him in flank; his fire becomes hotter along the whole line—he seems to be preparing to assault.

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Fig. 2.

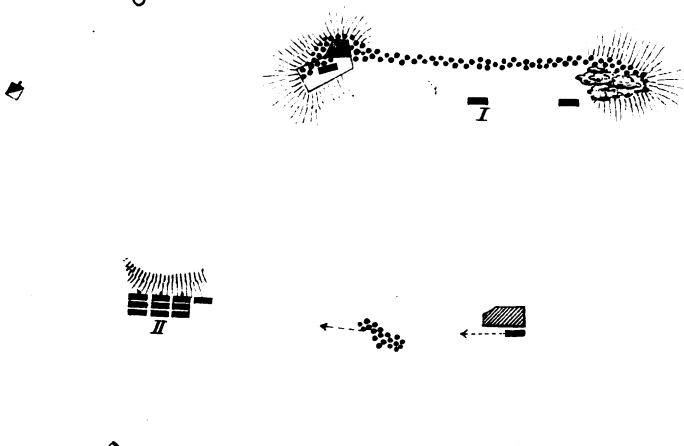

Fig. 3.

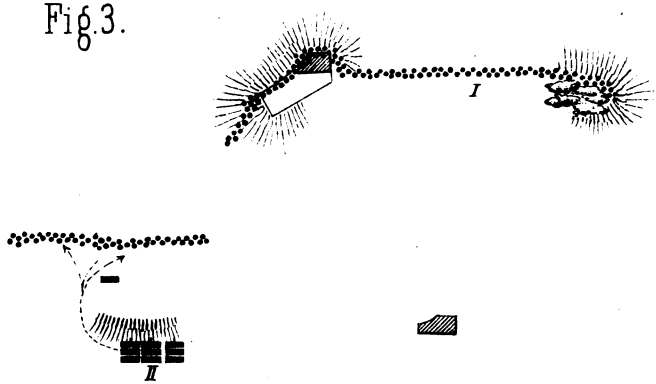

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Fig. 4.

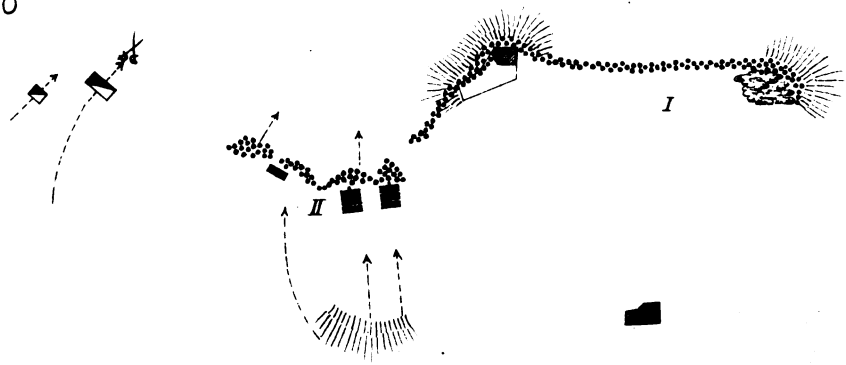
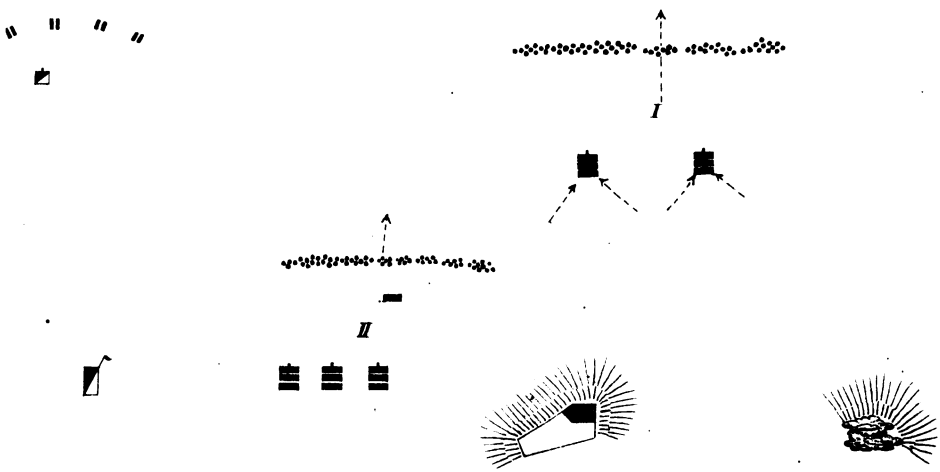


Fig. 5.



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Dispositions:

1 Bat. Stands fast, keeping up a rapid independent fire, whilst **2 Bat.** moves forward to attack.

2 Bat. Advances by order of the commander of the regiment, another company extending on the left of the skirmishing line, the remaining two companies following in rear of the right wing; the enemy's right flank is attacked.

The Squadron. Prepares to attack, and dashes forward as soon as **2 Bat.** is at close quarters with the enemy. The enemy moves forward to attack.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's attack is checked; his right wing retires hastily; a detachment in close order, which was coming up in support, is stopped by our advancing cavalry and also goes to the rear.

The right wing of the brigade has also made its attack; we receive the following order: 'The regiment will at once follow the right wing of the brigade in echelon.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances, two companies closing during the advance.

2 Bat. Follows in echelon on the left of **1 Bat.** at 200 paces distance; one company skirmishing, the other three companies behind its left wing.

The Squadron. One division keeps close to the retiring enemy; the rest advances on the left of **2 Bat.**

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42nd EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS, 4 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON IN BRIGADE (ON THE DEFENSIVE).

TACTICAL IDEA.

We have seen how a body of troops forming part of a larger corps must, when acting on the offensive, be employed in the different stages of the combat in the manner suitable to each particular stage (the *Introduction*, *Prosecution*, *Decision*, *Completion*); in like manner we shall now see that troops on the defensive cannot and ought not to be handled in exactly the same way on all occasions.

In the foregoing example our regiment was told off to defend independently a certain section of the position; it had therefore to provide a *Local Reserve*, while the *General Reserve* delivered the *Great Counter-stroke*. The situation will be very different when our regiment is ordered to occupy and defend the whole front in first line whilst other troops support it in second line and others again are held ready in reserve to deal the counter-stroke. In the former of these two cases, that of independent defence, our regiment had to be formed more in depth; in the latter case, on the contrary, it must be extended more in width—that is to say, instead of distributing our regiment both for repulsing the attacks of the enemy against a certain section of the position, and also for making a local counter attack, in the case now before us we must confine ourselves to the one act of repulsing the enemy.

The powerful fire of the artillery attached to us will contribute greatly to our success at this period of the defence as of the attack. In the introductory stage of the defence the artillery will force the assailant to deploy early and to show his whole strength; it will therefore direct its fire upon his columns: as the fight goes on our guns will aim at the enemy's artillery, so as to divert as far as possible its fire from the position held by our infantry; and lastly, when the crisis draws near and the enemy's infantry approaches, the fire must be concentrated on it alone and, as far as the nature of the ground and other circumstances permit, exclusively on its front line, which is alone immediately dangerous.

The cavalry attached to us has, during this defensive stage, only to threaten the enemy, finding however sometimes opportunities for short partial sallies; its real importance commences at the moment of our counter-stroke, when it must be prepared to throw itself recklessly with all the offensive power peculiar to it upon no matter what arm of the enemy that crosses its path.

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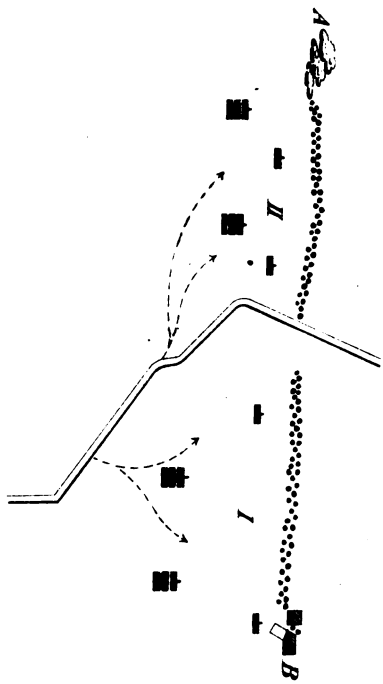
42nd Example.

Fig. 1.



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Our detachment forms the advanced guard of a brigade consisting of seven battalions, ten guns, and two squadrons. Order of march: Advanced body, one squadron; Support, two companies of **1 Bat.**; Main body, two companies of **1 Bat.**, four guns, **2 Bat.**

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

A report comes from the head of the advanced guard that the enemy is advancing in two strong columns; the scouts have come under infantry fire.

Upon this report the brigadier sends the following order: 'The brigade will for the present remain on the defensive. The advanced guard will occupy as quickly as possible the line A—B (mark on the ground a front of 1,000 to 1,200 paces); **2 Regiment** (two battalions) will stand in second line; **3 Regiment** (three battalions) will be in reserve: I intend as soon as possible to take the offensive against the enemy's left wing.'

During the march the following caution is communicated to the commandants, captains, and battery commander: 'The detachment will occupy as quickly as possible the line A—B; **2 Regiment** in second line, **3 Regiment** in reserve; the brigade will at first remain on the defensive, and will afterwards attack the enemy's left wing.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Deploys on the right of the road, occupying the space from thence to B, extending one company.

2 Bat. On the left of the road from thence to A, extending one company.

The Battery. Finds out a good position on the right rear of B, and opens fire as soon as the enemy's columns can be made out.

The Squadron. As soon as the deployment is complete takes post near the battery, detaching one division to the left flank.

The troops move into position as quickly as possible.

Second Period.

One battery of the advancing enemy replies to the fire of our artillery, at the same time eight battalions show themselves on the point of deploying; the foremost troops of the enemy are within 1,200 paces.

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Dispositions:

1 & 2 Bats. Open fire upon the enemy's columns. Volleys and independent fire by word of command.

The Squadron. Advances leisurely on the position assigned to it.

Third Period.

The enemy has by degrees deployed three battalions against the front occupied by us; his artillery keeps our whole position under fire, having taken post to his left rear. More columns are seen to be marching behind his advanced troops.

The brigade has taken up its position according to order; the other battery has unlimbered on the right of that already engaged.

Dispositions:

1 & 2 Bats. Supports reinforce skirmishers.

The Battery. Directs its fire upon the enemy's infantry.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's skirmishers now advance by successive rushes; we remark that their left wing is much the stronger, and that several battalions in company columns are following in rear of it.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. One company reinforces the skirmishers; one company takes post behind the right wing.

2 Bat. One company takes ground to its right, and takes post in rear of **1 Bat.**

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy seems to intend outflanking and attacking the right wing of the brigade; he also presses heavily against the right wing of our regiment, keeping up a sharp fire on our battery.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. One company reinforces the right wing of the skirmishers.

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Fig 2.

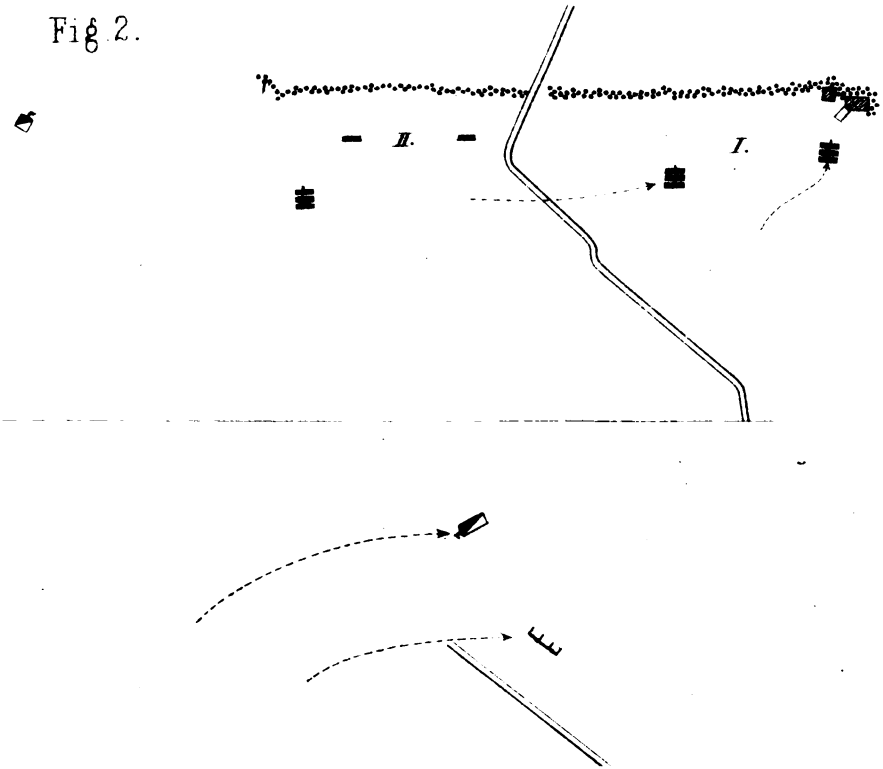

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Fig 4.

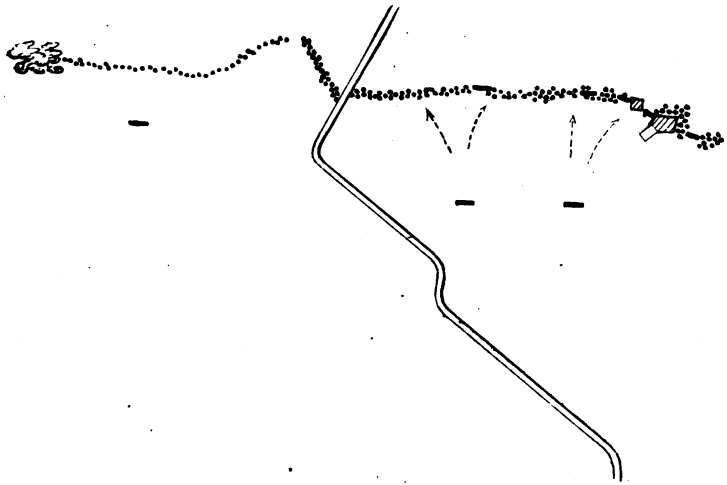
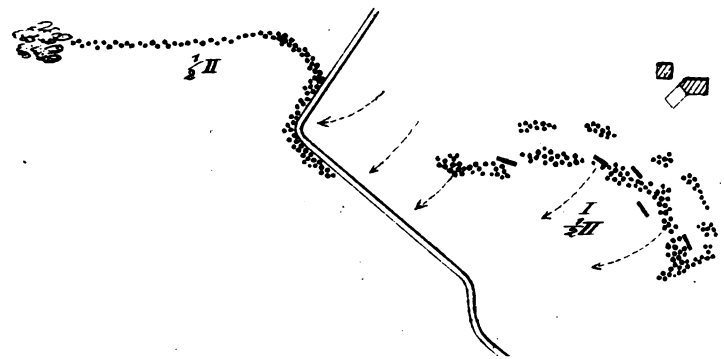


Fig 5.



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2 Bat. The company still remaining in close order takes ground to its right to support **1 Bat.**

The Squadron. Advances in extended order against the enemy's skirmishers to cover the battery.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy's skirmishers have halted at full 700 paces from those of **2 Bat.**, but the skirmishers opposed to **1 Bat.** have approached to within about 400 paces.

The brigadier sends notice that four battalions of the right wing are advancing to attack the enemy's left.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Two divisions from every company in support reinforce skirmishers.
The battalion stands fast when the right wing of the brigade makes its attack.

2 Bat. The right wing changes front to the right so as to take the enemy in flank, and also stands fast during the advance of our right wing.

The Squadron. Joins in the attack.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy develops superior forces against our advancing battalions, whose counter attack is checked, and which afterwards have to retire hastily.

Our squadron has come under heavy infantry fire and goes some 800 paces to the rear in disorder in order to rally.

We receive the following order: 'The left wing of the regiment will stand fast, the remainder will retire beyond the road, which it will hold.'

(The commandant of **1 Bat.**, three captains, and six division leaders of the same, also three division leaders of **2 Bat.**, fall out.)

Dispositions:

2 Bat. The left half-battalion stands fast; the right half-battalion retires quickly beyond the road and takes post along it.

1 Bat. Conforms to the movement of the right wing of **2 Bat.**

The Battery. Retires over the road and takes post on the right.

The Squadron. Assembles near the battery.

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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy's advance is to a certain extent arrested by the flanking fire of our regiment, posted along the road, and of our battery.

We receive the following order: 'The brigade will retire to the line F—G; the regiment will move towards the left flank of that position.'

Dispositions:

The Battery & The Squadron. Retire to F, take post there and cover the retreat of the regiment.

1 & 2 Bats. Retire by successive divisions, moving on F.

Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy only pushes his skirmishers up to the road, ceasing there from further pursuit.

Fresh troops are already established in the position F—G to cover our further retreat.

We receive the following order: 'The brigade will continue its retreat, the regiment at the head of the column; step out.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Closes on the march into open column of divisions.

The Battery. Follows **2 Bat.**

1 Bat. Behind the battery in open column of divisions.

The Squadron. Follows **1 Bat.**

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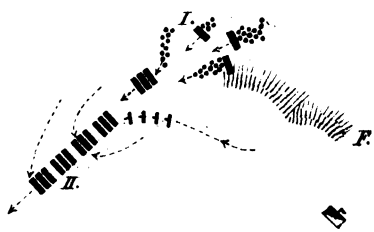
Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.



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43rd EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS, 1 SQUADRON AND 4 GUNS IN BRIGADE (ON THE DEFENSIVE).

TACTICAL IDEA.

As we have endeavoured to show in the two preceding examples, a body of troops, acting on the defensive, and forming part of a larger force, should adopt different principles for its fighting formation when told off to defend part of a position independently than when it has only to carry out one phase of the action, and that the purely defensive one. The conduct of troops intended to carry out the last and most decisive act of the fight, namely the counter attack, will differ from that referred to in the two preceding instances. Whilst troops engaged in the *independent* defence of a section forming part of a great defensive system are formed in depth, and whilst those restricted to a purely defensive attitude rather adopt an extended formation, those again who are employed in dealing the counter-stroke will be formed in clouds of skirmishers with columns following close at hand, thus neither absolutely assuming a formation in depth nor one in width.

The main principle of this most decisive period of the *Defensive* must be to take the enemy by surprise, not giving him time to take measures for parrying our stroke.

When, therefore, the commander-in-chief has ordered a counter attack to be made, it must be executed without much firing and without any check to the advance until quite up to the enemy. In this case we have nothing to do with *Introduction* or *Preparation*, our attack must be conducted according to the principles which regulate the last decisive assault when carrying a position; in short, we have but to make a general rush in one body up to the enemy's line.

A battery told off to aid in such a counter attack will be employed in like manner. As soon as the point of attack is known and the attacking column has moved off, the battery will gallop up as near as possible to the enemy and open a rapid well-maintained fire, without paying so much attention to perfect accuracy as to the number of shells which it can pitch unexpectedly into the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy.

Our cavalry will be handled in a similar way: it will follow close after the advancing infantry, and as soon as it observes any symptoms of unsteadiness on the part of the enemy, or as soon as he shows a disposition to make a counter attack, it must charge with the utmost impetuosity.

We must remember that all hesitation and feeling the way are out of place when troops on the defensive are making a counter attack, as the enemy would thereby only gain time and opportunity to recover from his surprise, to resume the initiative which he had temporarily lost, and thus regain the preponderance.

Our regiment, with the battery and the squadron, is posted in reserve at 600 paces distance in rear of the right wing of a brigade on the defensive; the said right wing has occupied a certain point (a

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clump of trees, a small hamlet, or such like); the battalions of our regiment stand close to one another in contiguous company columns, the battery and the squadron being in rear.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

An attack made by the enemy upon the right wing of our brigade has just been repulsed; the attack appears to be on the point of being repeated.

We receive the following order: 'Should the enemy make a fresh attack, the regiment will move forward to make a counter attack upon the enemy's left wing, the cavalry and the battery cooperating under orders of the regimental commander.'

(The regimental commander has satisfied himself from personal observation that the enemy's skirmishers have established themselves within 500 paces of those of the first line of the brigade.)

Caution communicated to the commandants, captains, also to the squadron and battery commanders: 'The regiment will make a counter attack should the enemy again come on; the battery and squadron will support our attack as far as they can.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Moves quickly forward by companies about 300 paces up to the line P—Q, forming line of company columns at full interval; each company pushes forward one division, which does not, however, as yet extend.

2 Bat. Assumes a similar formation on the left of **1 Bat.** Both battalions move as quickly as possible, keeping as far as practicable under cover.

The Battery. Moves at once into position 800 paces to the right of our regiment, opening fire only when the enemy advances to attack; then, however, as sharp a fire as possible.

The Squadron. Takes post to the right of the battery, and charges as soon as the two battalions come into collision with the enemy.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy reinforces his left wing and moves forward to attack.

Signal: 'Advance.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances upon the signal being given.

2 Bat. Follows **1 Bat.** in echelon at 200 paces distance. The divisions which had been pushed forward are extended; the battery fires salvoes.

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43rd Example.

Fig. 1.

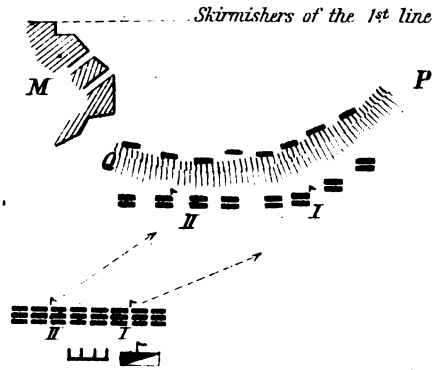

Fig. 2.

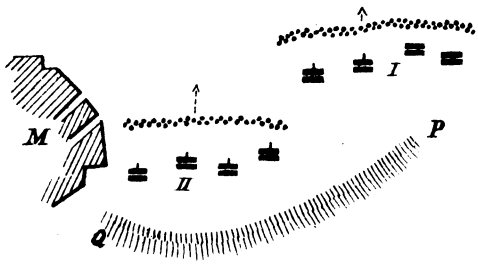

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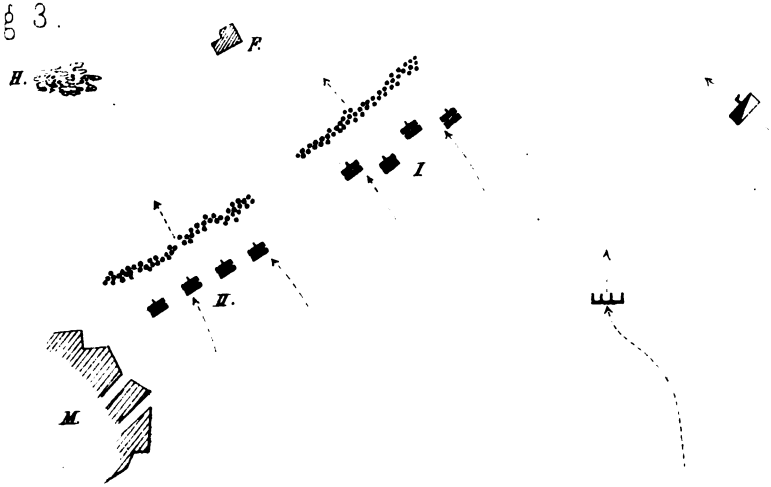
Fig 3.



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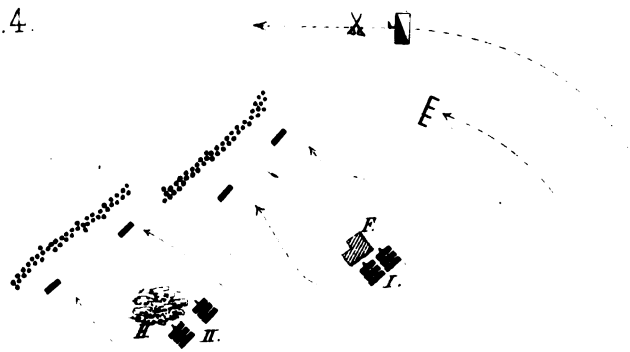

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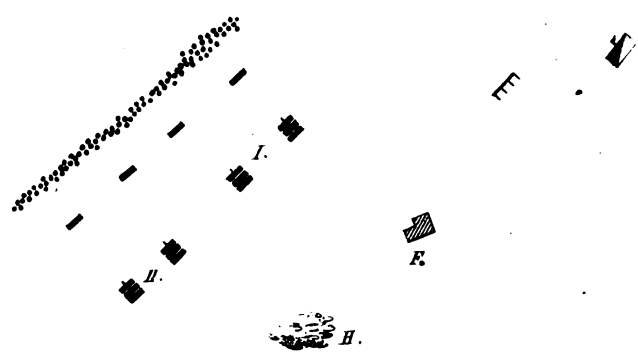

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Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The unexpected movement of our regiment and the fire of the battery check the enemy's attack.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Moves on F
2 Bat. Moves on H } Objects to be indicated.

Both battalions thus execute a change of front half-left.

The Battery. Follows the regiment, moving for the present about 500 paces.

The Squadron. Conforms.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy retires in disorder, and does not even stand fast in the new position occupied.

Signal: 'Advance Quickly.'

As soon as the battalions have reached F and H,

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Two companies pursue; the rest halt and reform.
2 Bat. Two companies pursue; the rest halt and reform.
The Battery. Gallops forward and opens fire.
The Squadron. Charges.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

We remark that the enemy is receiving reinforcements which appear to be at least as strong as our regiment.

Signal: 'Halt.'

Dispositions:

1 & 2 Bats. The companies in close order move up to the front.
The Battery. Stands fast.
The Squadron. On the right rear of the battery.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy, who is now occupying a strong position, opens fire both from infantry and artillery.

We receive the following order: 'The regiment, together with the artillery and cavalry attached to it, will retire to the main position.'

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Dispositions:

1 Bat. Retires from the left in echelon of half-battalions at 200 paces distance.

2 Bat. Does the same.

The Battery. Retires to M as soon as the right wing of the regiment has commenced its retreat.

The Squadron Is extended along our front as soon as the battery has moved off.

After going 600 paces to the rear,

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Forms line of contiguous company columns on the right of **2 Bat.**

2 Bat. Forms line of contiguous company columns on the right of M.

The Battery. Takes post behind our regiment.

The Squadron. Remains in front.

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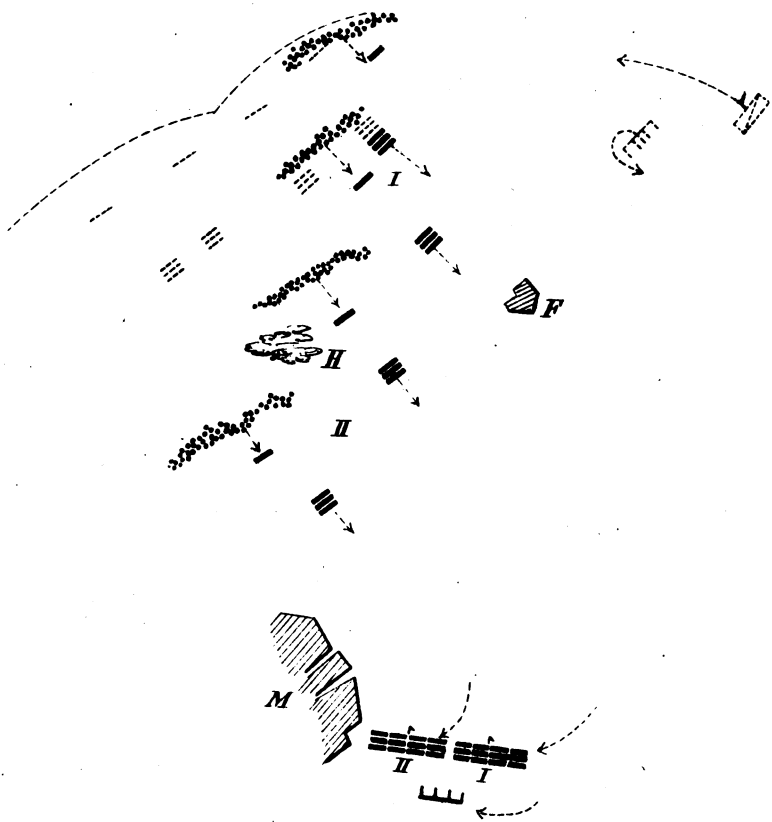
Fig. 6.



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44th EXAMPLE.

3 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE OFFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

We mentioned in a former example that when a body of troops forming part of a larger force is entrusted with the defence of a certain section of a position, and thus made to a certain extent independent, it must, with a view to the proper performance of its task, provide both for defence and counter-attack. The same holds good for the assailant when a part of his force is told off to carry a particular section of the enemy's position. He must expect that the defender of the position which he has to carry will keep a local reserve in hand, to meet which he must also keep back part of his own force. This will by no means prevent him from employing part of the force held in reserve for reinforcing the troops engaged in the attack, if it should seem advisable to do so.

In making every attack, our first consideration must be the direct blow against the object of assault; to weaken this blow for the purpose of keeping intact a so-called reserve would be but false economy, and might easily lead to the repulse of our attack and to the employment of this reserve, which we have taken pains to keep intact, for no other purpose than that of the pure defensive.

A mixed brigade (six battalions, one battery, and one squadron) has an advanced guard composed of one battalion, two guns, and three divisions of cavalry. The enemy is discovered in position; the introductory skirmish has proved that his left wing, against which the general situation seems to make it desirable that we should act, is resting upon a hamlet which he has occupied.

Our regiment is halted under cover in line of contiguous company columns; **1 and 2 Bats.** in first line, **3 Bat.** in second line; the advanced guard is in action about 300 paces to the left front.

We receive the following order: 'The regiment will take the hamlet in its front; on the left of the regiment a detachment which has hitherto acted as advanced guard will hold in check the remainder of the enemy's front line; the artillery will operate on the right; two battalions will be kept back as general reserve and will follow the regiment at 600 paces distance: move off at once.'

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First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

Our regiment has not as yet come under fire.

(Hamlet B is at an average distance of about 1,400 paces from us.)

Caution to the commandants and captains: 'The regiment will take that hamlet: two battalions will follow at 600 paces distance as general reserve.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat. In first line; each company extends two divisions.

2 Bat. The left half-battalion in second line at 200 paces in rear of the centre of **1 Bat.**; the right half-battalion as main body 300 paces behind the right wing of the first line; the whole in company columns.

3 Bat. Forms the reserve in company columns 300 paces in rear of the main body.

The battalions advance at once.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The skirmishing line, having now approached to within 800 paces of the outskirts of the village, comes under very heavy infantry fire, whilst one of the enemy's batteries, posted further to the rear and on his flank, directs its fire upon the main body and upon the reserve.

We remark an entrance to the village opposite to our centre, and another smaller one in front of our left.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances by successive rushes up to within 400 paces of the border of the village.

2 Bat. The half-battalion in second line sends one company to prolong the left, throwing it forward offensively, and another company in support. The half-battalion forming the main body halts and deploys.

3 Bat. Halts.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's artillery plays with considerable effect upon our main body and upon the reserve.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Sends a company from the main body, which extends for the purpose of driving away the enemy's battery (whose position is marked); the other company moves to within 200 paces of the centre of **1 Bat.**

3 Bat. One company moves at the double till in rear of the centre of **1 Bat.**, then advances.

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44th Example.

Fig. 1.

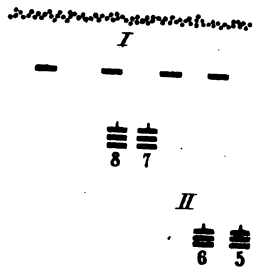

Fig. 2.

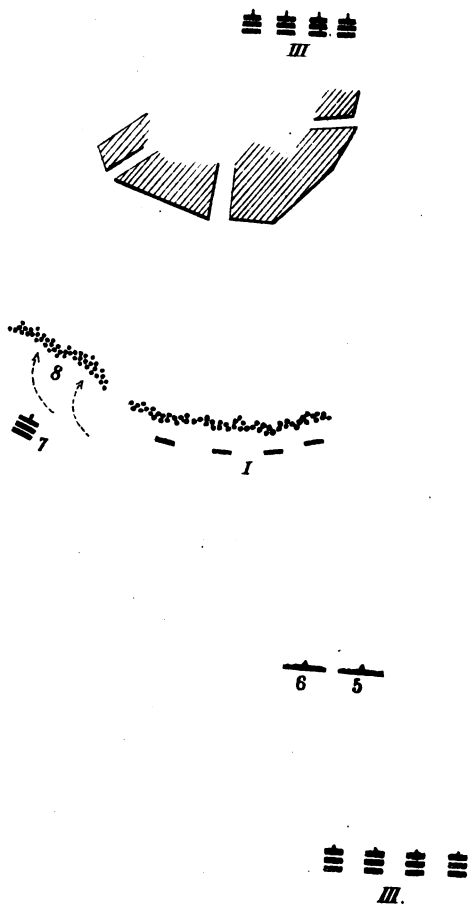

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Fig. 3.

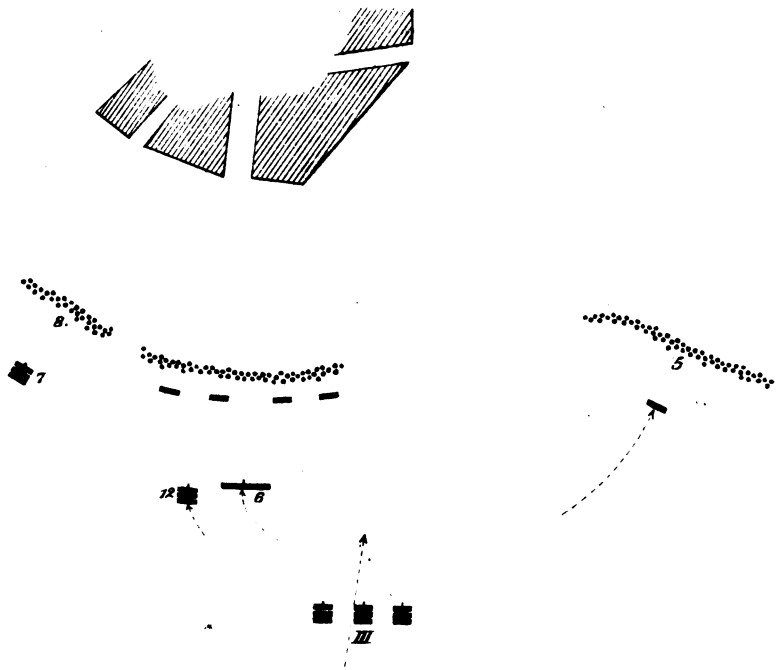


Fig. 4.

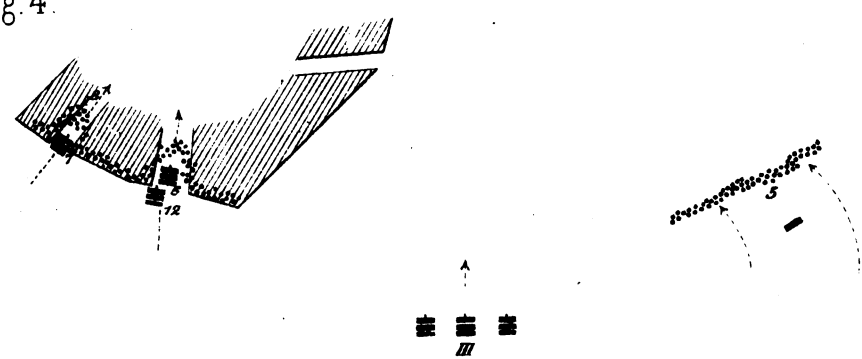
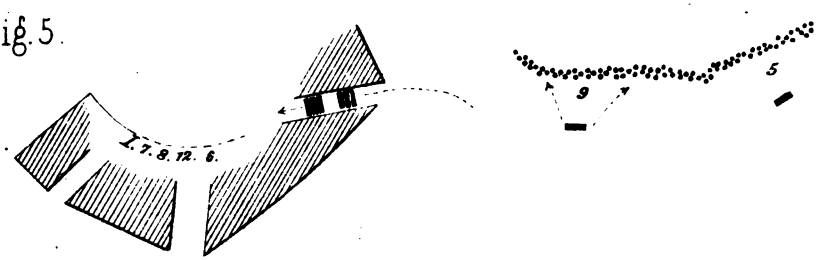


Fig. 5.



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Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy's battery has been forced to withdraw; some detachments in close order show themselves in rear and on the flanks of the village.

Dispositions:

The Detached Co. (Against the battery.) When the attack begins will advance against the aforesaid detachments of the enemy, three companies of **3 Bat.** taking the same direction. As soon as **3 Bat.** has arrived at within 300 paces of the first line,

Signal: 'Advance.' Then **'Advance Quickly.'**

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy abandons the outskirts of the village, but seems inclined to offer a stout resistance inside it, whilst some of his companies are deployed outside it and advance.

Dispositions:

One company extends and combines with that detached from **2 Bat.** in checking the enemy outside the village. Two companies move as quickly as possible from the left into the village, so as to take the defenders in flank and rear.

Sixth Period.

The enemy is driven little by little out of the village; his detachments outside it also go to the rear.

The companies outside the village keep up their fire upon the retreating enemy.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. The three companies in the place reform quickly and then move out of the place to the right.

Seventh Period.

The enemy seems, after being driven from the village, to intend continuing his retreat.

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We receive the following order from the brigadier: 'The regiment will occupy the place with one battalion; the other two battalions will be formed on its right rear as a general reserve; the three remaining battalions of the brigade will undertake the pursuit.'

Dispositions:

1 Bat.	Occupies the place.
2 Bat.	Assembles, forming line of contiguous company columns on the right rear of the place near **3 Bat.**
3 Bat.	Assembles 300 paces in rear of the place, and forms line of contiguous company columns.

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45th EXAMPLE.

3 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE DEFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

When the commander-in-chief does not think it advisable to accept battle offered by a well-posted enemy, or when he does not think it desirable, either on account of the enemy's superiority in numbers or for some other reason, to make full use of all the forces at his disposal, the troops already engaged with the enemy will receive orders to break off the fight and to retire. Although this retreat will be voluntary and not directly forced upon him, the operation will still generally offer serious difficulties, these being much greater in the case of a withdrawal from the defensive than of one from the offensive. In the latter case the enemy will require some time to make up his own mind as to the mode of conducting his pursuit; and whilst he is doing this the assailant will already have been able to withdraw the greater part of his forces: this is one of the many advantages offered by the initiative consequent upon offensive action. In the former case, the defender being in close contact with the enemy, the latter will at once take notice of the commencement of any movement in retreat; and if the assailant understands his business, the more the defender tries to get away from him the more energetic will be his endeavours to hold the latter fast.

In consequence of this tendency on the part of the assailant, we have frequently occasion to notice in military history that the defender only really begins to get into trouble when he commences to retreat.

When, therefore, a body of troops which has been fighting on the defensive is called upon to retire, it must endeavour, at any rate at first, to conceal its intention from the enemy, so as to enable it to gain some ground upon him in the first movement of retreat. This may be arrived at both by taking careful and skilful advantage of the ground, and also by adopting measures which seem inconsistent with the idea of retreat, such as the threat of a counter attack. In no case will it be allowable for the whole line actually in contact with the enemy to retire at once; but a portion of it only will move off, whilst another part covers its retreat, holding itself ready to take advantage of any opportunity for a counter attack. But, above all, it is absolutely necessary that every member of a body of troops thus situated, from the commander downwards, should understand what is being done. This is a case in which the greatest independence of the separate sub-units, as far as is consistent with the general idea, comes strongly into play; for as soon as the retreat begins, general dispositions only can be made by those in chief command.

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Our regiment has been employed in the occupation of a defensive position; **2 Bat.** on the right, **3 Bat.** on the left, each with two companies extended; **1 Bat.** in line of company columns at full interval 400 paces in rear of the left wing.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy's skirmishing line has approached to within 800 paces of us; he shows a considerable superiority of forces, particularly in rear of his right wing.

We receive the following order: 'The brigade will accept battle in the line M—N (1,800 paces in rear of the right wing of the regiment); the remainder of the brigade has already moved off to the named position; the regiment will commence its retreat towards the left wing of the same as soon as the enemy commences his attack in earnest.'

The following caution is immediately communicated to the three battalions: 'The regiment will retreat, commencing with the right wing, and taking the general direction N' (village, wood, or such-like).

Dispositions:

1 Bat.	Advances quickly 300 paces beyond the left flank (the position to be marked). Two companies skirmish, halt, and keep up a sharp fire.
3 Bat.	Stands fast and keeps up a sharp fire.
2 Bat.	As soon as **1 Bat.**, which is making a false attack, has reached its position in advance of the left flank, it retires 400 paces (to a marked point), the skirmishers closing during the retreat.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's right wing has been momentarily checked by the advance of **1 Bat.**; but he soon brings superior forces against it into fire.

Dispositions:

1 Bat.	Retires into a flanking position (to be marked) 400 paces in rear of the left wing of **3 Bat.**
3 Bat.	Stands fast, reinforcing skirmishers.
1 Bat.	Two companies extend.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The troops which the enemy has brought into action are now directed principally against **3 Bat.**

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45th Example.

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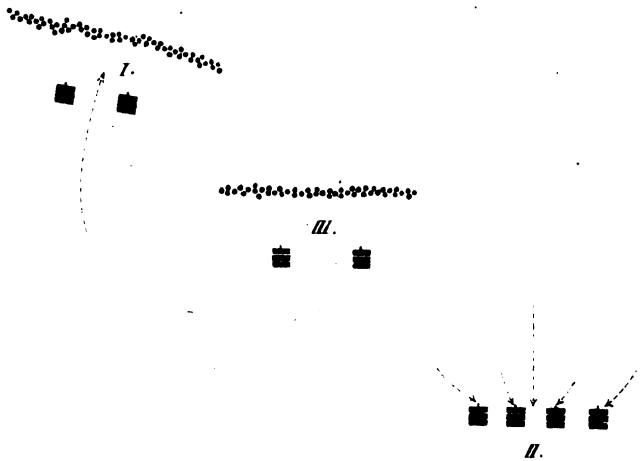

Fig. 2.

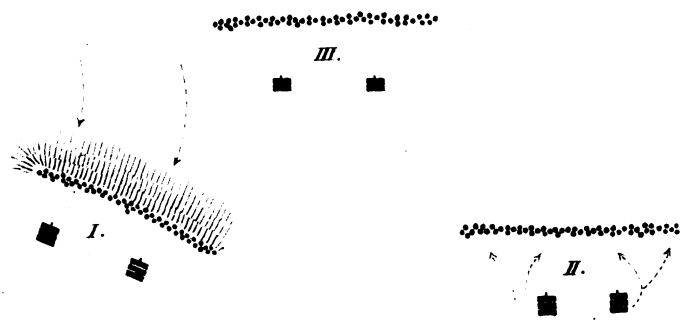

Fig. 3.

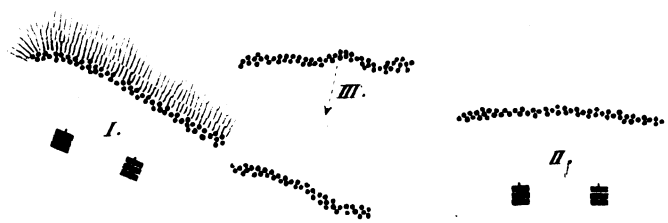

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Fig. 4.

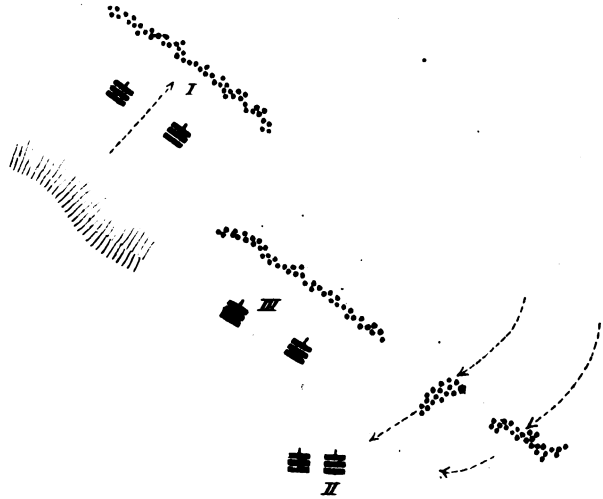


Fig. 5.

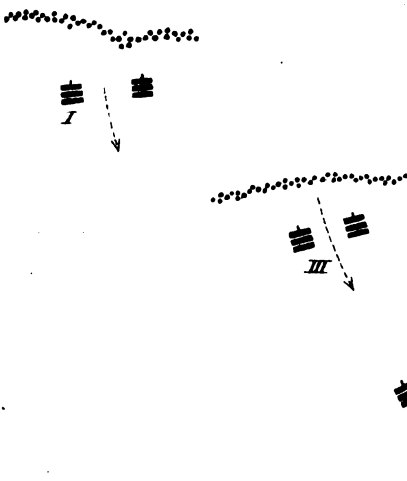
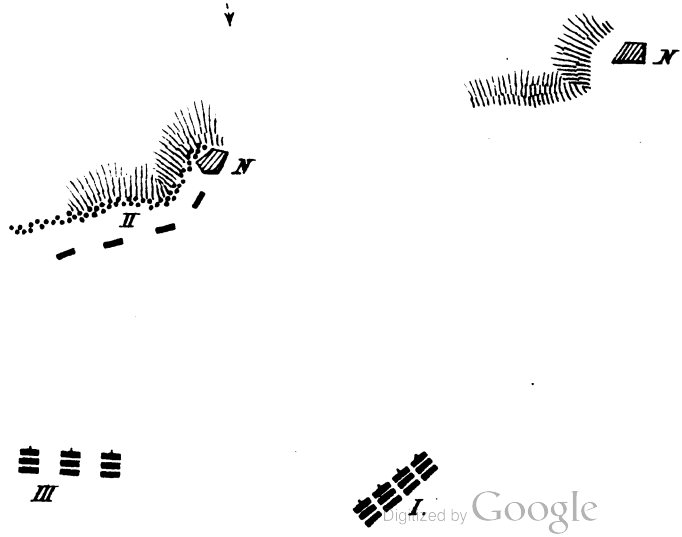


Fig. 6.



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Dispositions:

3 Bat. Retires quickly into line with **1 Bat.**, its skirmishers and supports relieving one another successively.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy is meanwhile engaged in a very sharp exchange of fire with **2 Bat.**, and makes a gradual concentric advance against the latter.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Advances quickly 300 paces (to a marked point) and opens a sharp fire.

3 Bat. Conforms to the advance of **1 Bat.** at 200 paces distance.

2 Bat. Retires quickly in rear of the right of **3 Bat.** as soon as the left wing of the regiment makes its forward movement.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

Our regiment, having now cleared the front of the brigade, the latter pours a heavy fire both of infantry and artillery upon the enemy, who in consequence arrests his pursuit.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Continues its retreat on N.

3 Bat. Follows **2 Bat.** at 200 paces distance.

1 Bat. Follows **3 Bat.** at 200 paces distance.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy brings more troops into action with the intention of attacking the main position.

We receive the following order: 'One battalion of the regiment will prolong the line of the brigade to the left; one battalion will take post in rear of the left wing in second line; one battalion in rear of the centre as special reserve for the left wing.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. In first line on the left of N.

3 Bat. In second line, company columns, 300 paces in rear of the left wing of the first line.

1 Bat. Reserve, 500 paces in rear of the centre of the first line, contiguous company columns.

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46th EXAMPLE.

3 BATTALIONS IN BRIGADE (ON THE DEFENSIVE).

Tactical Idea.

As we have already remarked in the foregoing example, even a voluntary retreat is generally very difficult to execute after we have been in close contact with the enemy; but a retreat actually forced upon us by the superior power of the enemy is a very much more difficult operation. In such a case the commander loses all power of actually leading his troops; all he can do is to give the separate units such directions as may seem most suitable to the general situation. It may happen to the best troops to be forced to retreat very much against their will; hence it would appear advisable to reduce all such possible contingencies to practice—the troops, indeed, deriving greater benefit from the instruction given before and after each exercise than from the tactical exercise itself, which is generally a very simple performance. Both officers and men must be taught that during such retreat it is of the greatest importance that the latter should gather, as it were instinctively, about the former, whilst these endeavour with the utmost energy and self-devotion to form the men when scattered into units easy to control and to move—whenever possible into companies—and as far as practicable to hold them together.

But troops must not be contented with this passive attitude; they must also be accustomed to use their whole power in stemming the retreating torrent and arresting the enemy's onward rush. Therefore all compact bodies still remaining available will be expected to make vigorous sallies against the enemy's flanks without waiting for orders;* when these can no longer be reached we must endeavour to make a direct charge against the front of the pursuing enemy with all bodies of troops remaining still in hand, or with any that we can scrape together for the purpose—always supposing that the body making the sally is not too small, and that the retreating torrent is not too heavy; for an advancing *company*, however brave it may be, will most probably be carried away to the rear by a *regiment* in hasty retreat: however, if no further supports are available, the attempt must be made with what we have; and it possibly will succeed if all officers and men are accustomed at once to show front and to join in the attack whenever a body of troops thus comes up in support with drums beating the charge.

* Almost all the dispositions given in the present example should on active service be made without waiting for orders; to note them as we do here gives the performance at once the character of a prearranged exercise.

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46th Example.

Fig. 1.

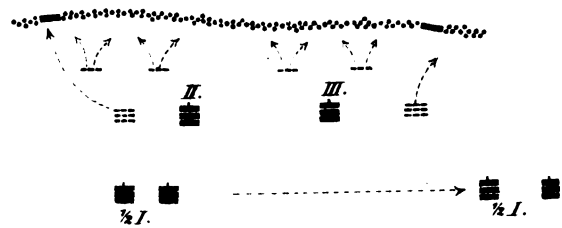

Fig. 2.

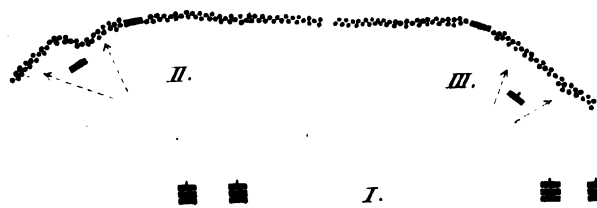

Fig. 3.

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Our regiment is occupying a defensive position in first line, **3 Bat.** on the right, **2 Bat.** on the left, each battalion having two companies disposed as skirmishers and supports, the other two companies in close order; **1 Bat.** in line of company columns 300 paces in rear of the left wing.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy, favoured by the ground, has suddenly developed a strong line of skirmishers from 500 to 600 paces from us, and we remark considerable bodies in close order advancing behind each wing.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers; one company reinforces the right wing.

2 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers; one company reinforces the left wing.

1 at. The right half-battalion takes ground to its right until overlapping the right of **3 Bat.**

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's skirmishers being in far superior number, have approached to within less than 400 paces of our own, and have already turned their right wing.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. One company prolongs the right wing, its outer flank being thrown back defensively.

2 Bat. One company prolongs the left wing, its outer flank being thrown back defensively.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy has completely repulsed a counter attack attempted by the other battalions of our brigade; the troops opposed to our regiment now break into the position between **2 and 3 Bats**, and on the right of the latter.

(The commandants of **2 and 3 Bats.**, three captains and five division leaders of **3 Bat.**, also two captains and three division leaders of **2 Bat.**, fall out.)

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Retires rapidly on M
2 Bat. Retires rapidly on N } Objects to be marked.

1 Bat. All its fractions rush forward and attack the enemy

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Fourth Period.

The enemy being in very superior numbers is only checked partially and for a short time by these sallies, and the parties which have made them are in their turn forced to retire.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Retreats to O (object to be marked).

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy stops his pursuit, but still keeps up a heavy fire upon us.

Our brigade has been reinforced; we receive the following order: 'The regiment will occupy as soon as possible the flanking position M—N' (to be marked).

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Occupies N and the ground on its right with all possible expedition.

3 Bat. Occupies M and the ground on its left.

1 Bat. Assembles in reserve on the left of O, in rear of the centre of **2 and 3 Bats.**

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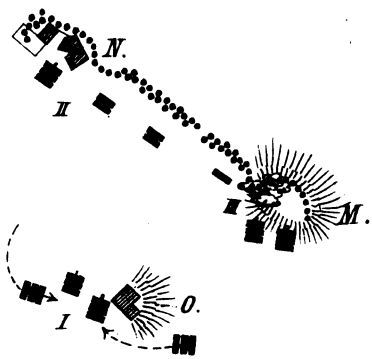
Fig. 4.



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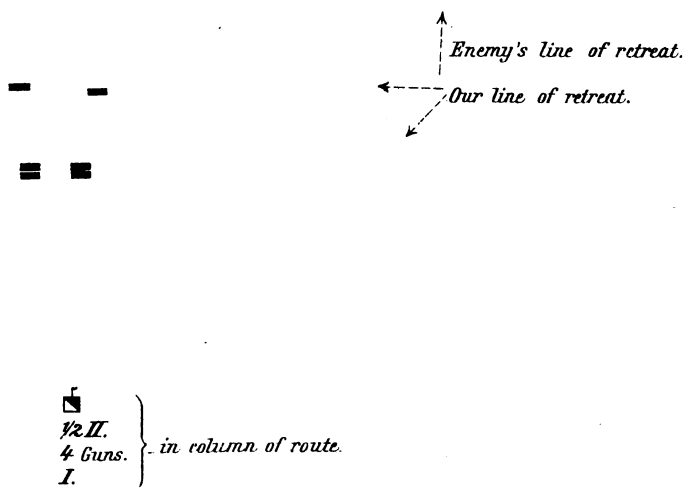
47th Example.

Fig. 1.



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47th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS, 4 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON

AGAINST

1½ BATTALIONS, 4 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The cavalry which has been pushed forward to reconnoitre having in the *Introductory* combat consequent thereupon gained an approximate knowledge of the enemy's strength and dispositions, the attack—that is, its actual *Prosecution*—is directed against one of the enemy's flanks. Both opposing forces occupying but a small space, the detachment which has been employed in the *Introductory* combat may at once assist in the *Preparation* of the attack, and thus all troops in first line, including the artillery, will have to direct their fire concentrically upon the intended point of assault. When larger forces are engaged, and thus a larger space is occupied, the contrary holds good, and the troops of all arms which have been engaged in the *Introductory* combat will be employed more in occupying the attention of the enemy and holding in check the portions of his force which are not directly assailed.

When the time comes for making the most of a successful attack, the infantry and artillery will do their share of the work by keeping up a steady fire upon the retreating enemy, whilst the cavalry will endeavour to gain as much ground to the front as possible by its charges, preventing the broken enemy from quickly rallying and again showing front; at the same time the infantry reserve, having followed quickly on the steps of the cavalry, will play their part towards the completion of the victory by at once occupying the ground which the horsemen have won, by opening a well-sustained fire from the advanced position and by repulsing any attempts which the enemy may make to recover the lost ground.

Our detachment is covering the right flank of a stronger column, and is disposed in the following order of march: Advanced body, three divisions of cavalry; support, a wing of **2 Bat.**; main body, one division of cavalry, the other wing of **2 Bat.**, four guns, **1 Bat.**

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

Our scouts meet with some of the enemy's cavalry patrols, behind which appear some small detachments of infantry.

Dispositions:

The Support. (A wing of **2 Bat.**) forms company columns; each company pushes forward one division; the whole keep moving on.

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Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's artillery suddenly opens fire.

(The distance of our main body from the enemy's battery is about 2,000 paces.)

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

The Battery. Trots forward and unlimbers 600 paces on the right front. (Position to be marked.) Opens fire upon the enemy's artillery.

The Division of Cavalry. (At the head of the main body) accompanies the battery.

2 Bat. The two companies of the original support form the first line; two divisions of each company extend; one company follows in rear of their centre in close order as second line; the fourth company remains with **1 Bat.**, on its right.

1 Bat. Forms line of company columns at double interval on the left of the road, and follows **2 Bat.** as main body at 500 paces distance.

The Squadron. Remains out in front until the enemy's infantry fire begins, and then takes post near our battery.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's infantry open a sharp fire at about 900 paces distance, having occupied a position right across the road; some companies in close order are remarked upon his right, and in the same direction he has some artillery in position, whilst upon his left we see some cavalry.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. The first line halts; supports reinforce skirmishers; the companies of the second line are disposed as supports; the company remaining behind with **1 Bat.** moves up and takes post as third line behind the left wing.

1 Bat. Halts, and takes cover or lies down.

The Squadron. Joins the battery, with the exception of one division, which remains on the left.

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Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

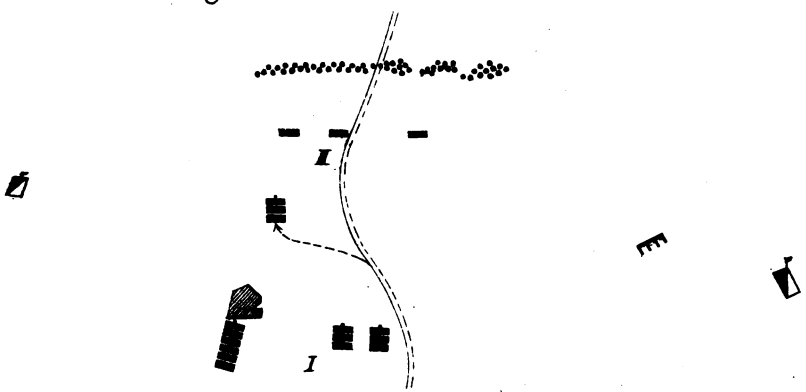

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Fig. 4.

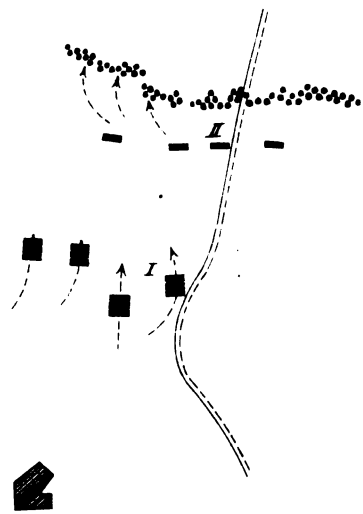


Fig. 5.

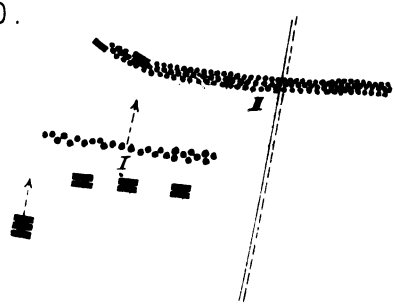
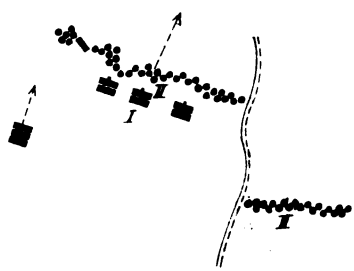


Fig. 6.



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Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

To judge from the extent of the enemy's front and the amount of his fire, he appears to have one battalion in first line, and we clearly make out two companies in close order in rear of his right wing.

Our commander determines to attack the enemy's right wing, notwithstanding the artillery there posted, because by doing so we shall possibly be able to keep the enemy away from the flank of the corps which we have to cover without compromising our retreat.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Attacks the enemy's right wing, advancing up to about 400 paces of his position, prolonging the line to the left.

1 Bat. Joins in the attack on the enemy's right wing, moving forward by companies at the double, as far as possible under cover, 400 paces in rear of the left wing of **2 Bat.**

The Battery. Likewise joins the attack, advancing by divisions 400 paces, and directing its fire against the enemy's right wing (some object).

The Squadron. Three divisions escort the battery.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's artillery directs its fire against **1 Bat.** as soon as it discovers the latter in movement.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers; the left wing fires group volleys at the enemy's battery. The right wing stands fast whilst **1 Bat.** advances to attack; three companies in first line, each with one division extended, one company following in reserve.

The Battery. Increases the rapidity of its fire when the attack commences.

The Squadron. Keeps watch over the enemy's cavalry.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy's artillery directs an extremely sharp fire against our advancing troops; the right wing of the enemy's skirmishers is reinforced.

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Dispositions:

The Squadron. Attacks the enemy's cavalry as soon as it begins to advance.

When **1 Bat.** has reached the skirmishing line,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Seventh Period.

The enemy's artillery seems preparing to limber up, but his cavalry moves forward to attack.

Our squadron (three divisions) makes its counter attack according to order.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance Quickly.'

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy's right wing is driven from its position; his cavalry is exposed to our infantry fire, and at the same time charged by our cavalry.

We reach the enemy's position.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.' *

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Pursues.
2 Bat. Assembles in line of company columns.
The Battery. Gallops forward.
The Squadron. Remains in contact with the enemy.

Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 8.)

The enemy continues his retreat.

Signal: 'Cease Firing.'

Our detachment pursues its march.

* It is hardly necessary to mention that a general commencement of rapid independent firing should not be ordered.

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Fig 7.

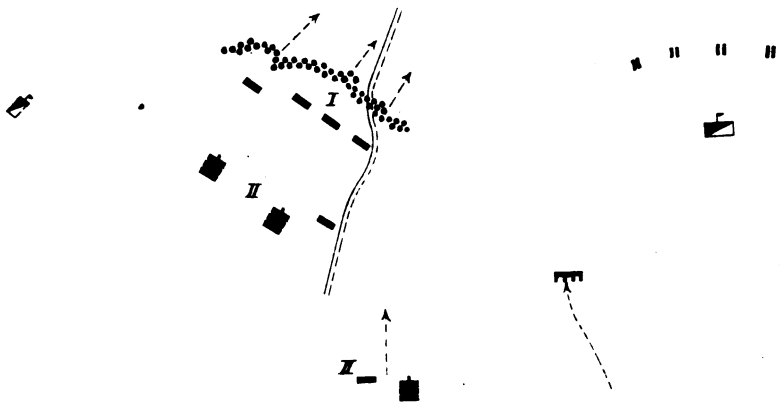

Fig. 8.

½I
4 Guns. } in column of route.
II

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Dispositions:

1 Bat. One wing as support, the other wing at the head of the main body; the companies close.

2 Bat. Follows in rear of the battery.

The Battery. At the head of the main body, marching in rear of the wing of **1 Bat.**

The Squadron. Moves on, forming the advanced body and also covering the left flank.

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48th EXAMPLE.

2 BATTALIONS, 4 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON
AGAINST
3 BATTALIONS, 6 GUNS, AND 2 SQUADRONS.

Tactical Idea.

The enemy's numerical superiority, which has been ascertained by the reconnoissance, or at any rate later on by the introductory combat, need not always of itself alone induce us to take the defensive; by making an unexpected attack with all our strength, by skilfully making the most of some accidental advantages of ground, we may sometimes take the offensive with a good prospect of success, even against a considerably stronger force than our own.

(We must here, as well as in all peace exercises, leave out of consideration the moral factor, which is of such great importance in actual work.)

But if a superior enemy takes proper measures, the weaker side must endeavour to re-establish the balance of power by assuming the defensive and by a skilful use of favourable local conditions, then only resuming the offensive—that is to say, again taking the initiative. The weaker force must await the stronger opponent in a position suitable for defence; it must then inflict upon the assailant the greatest possible loss by the utmost development of fire, and, only after the latter has made an unsuccessful assault, must fall upon him with a reserve held hitherto intact for that purpose. It is only allowable to act on the defensive without a counter-stroke when the defender neither wishes nor ought to aim at any decisive result—as, for instance, in the case of a combat purposely spun out only to gain time.

A detachment is sent out for the purpose of making a wide sweep to turn the right flank of a position held by the enemy. It is in order of march; one squadron furnishing the advanced body and the right flanking party; a wing of **1 Bat.** forming the support; the other wing of **1 Bat.**, followed by four guns and **2 Bat.**, forming the main body.

The enemy has sent out a detachment for a similar purpose, viz. to turn the left flank of our main position.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

During the march the report comes in that a considerable column of the enemy is showing itself on our right flank.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

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48th Example.

Fig. 1.

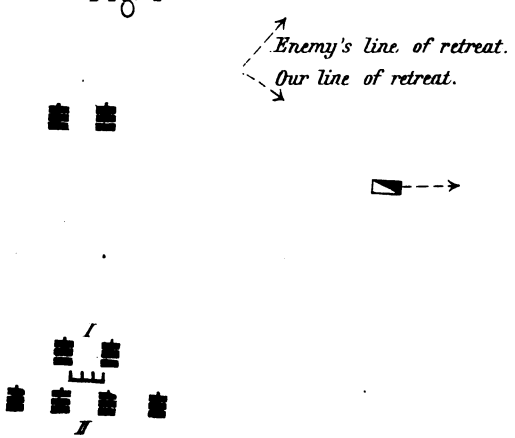

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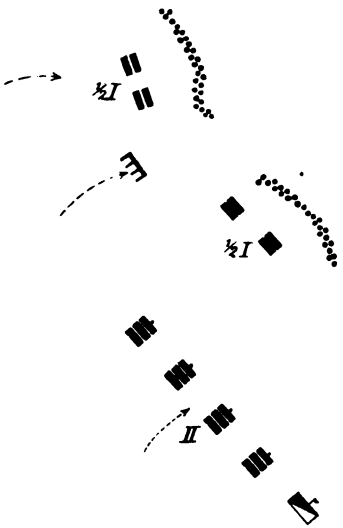
Fig. 2.



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Dispositions:

The Squadron. Moves to the right and reconnoitres, leaving only patrols in front.

1 & 2 Bats. Form company columns.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The squadron reports that a superior force of cavalry is pressing upon it; at the same time one of the enemy's batteries opens fire against the right flank of our detachment.

Dispositions:

The Battery. Trots forward to the right, unlimbering and opening fire (from a point to be marked).

1 Bat. The wing hitherto in support moves forward to the left front of the battery, the other wing taking post on its right front; each company extends one division.

2 Bat. Takes post 300 paces behind the right wing of **1 Bat.**, forming company columns at double interval.

The Squadron. Assembles on the right of **2 Bat.**, guarding the left flank with patrols.

Third Period.

We now make out that the enemy is also superior in infantry; he has already deployed clouds of skirmishers at a considerable distance.

The commander of our detachment determines to retire to a favourable position situated 800 paces to the rear, and there to await the attack of the enemy.

Caution to the commandants and to the battery and squadron commanders: 'The detachment will receive the attack of the enemy in that position (pointing to O—P), guarding particularly its right flank, that being our eventual line of retreat.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Occupies the position O—P as first line.

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1 Bat. One wing as second line, the other wing as reserve behind the right of **2 Bat.**

The Battery & The Squadron. Also take post on the right, trotting at once to the rear; one division of horsemen remains upon the left flank in observation.

The battalions at once move to the positions assigned to them without engaging in any serious skirmish with the enemy.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy pursues with dense clouds of skirmishers and compact bodies; his cavalry works round the right flank of our detachment and observes its movements; his artillery opens fire upon our own whilst the latter limbers up and again unlimbers.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. One division moves off to cover the battery, the right flank of which is threatened by the enemy's cavalry.

1 Bat. Moves at the double as soon as it approaches the position.

The Battery. Directs its fire upon the enemy's infantry.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy appears to have a stronger force in his first line than our **1 Bat.**; we see clearly behind his left two lines of infantry in company columns; he has also massed his artillery on the left, and his cavalry remains in observation opposite our right flank.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Supports reinforce skirmishers.

1 Bat. One company moves up to reinforce the right wing of the first line.

The Battery. Increases the rapidity of its fire against the enemy's infantry.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's skirmishers have now established themselves at about 500 paces from our own.

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Fig. 3.

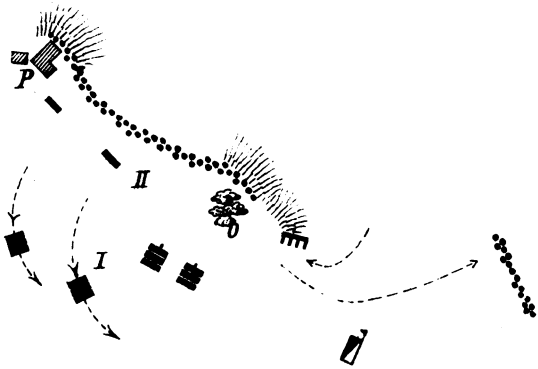

Fig. 4.

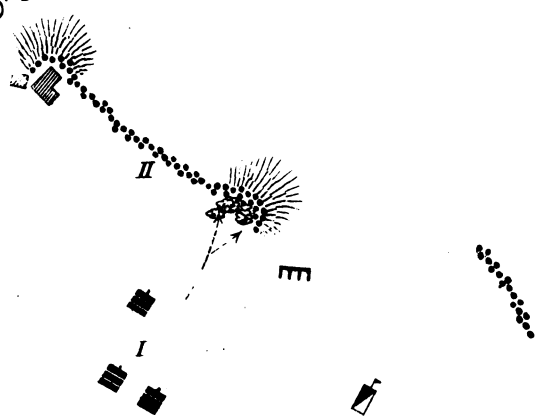

Fig. 5.

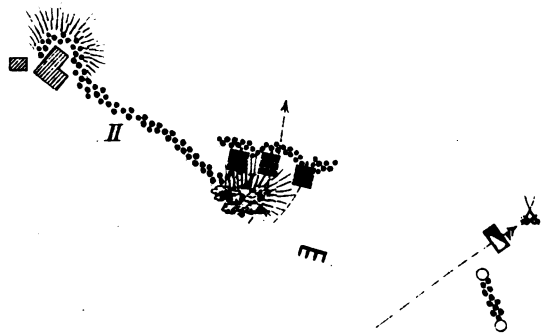

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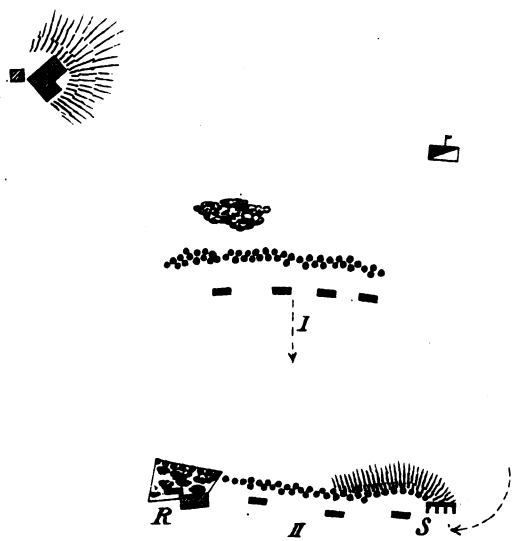
Fig. 6.



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(The commandant of **2 Bat.**, also two captains and four division leaders of the same battalion, fall out.)

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Stands fast.

1 Bat. Moves forward to attack upon the signal **Advance**; the company which had been pushed forward into first line takes part in this attack.

The Battery. Fires salvoes upon the left wing of the enemy's infantry.

The Squadron. Charges the enemy's cavalry as soon as the latter comes on.

The enemy moves forward to attack, his cavalry rushing upon our battery.

Signal: '1 Battalion Advance.'

(Our squadron charges the left flank of the enemy's cavalry.)

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

We have succeeded in driving the enemy back to the position which he had last held, where, however, he seems determined to stand fast; his cavalry has given way before the flank attack of our own.

The commander of our detachment determines to make use of this opportunity for taking up a new position further to the rear.

(Two captains and three division leaders of **1 Bat.** fall out, also the battery commander.)

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Retires quickly and occupies the line S—R (to be marked).

1 Bat. Also retires to S—R, following **2 Bat.** leisurely; each company extends two divisions.

The Battery. Gallops back to the right flank of S—R, unlimbers at S and covers the retreat of our infantry.

The Squadron. Assembles and follows the retreat of **1 Bat.**, taking post near the battery.

The following order is received: 'The detachment will await further orders in its present position.

As the enemy does not pursue as expected,

The Squadron. Again advances to feel for him.

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49th EXAMPLE.

3 BATTALIONS, 6 GUNS, AND 2 SQUADRONS

AGAINST

1½ BATTALIONS, 2 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON.

TACTICAL IDEA.

When we have discovered in the course of the introductory combat, or even perhaps by the previous reconnoissance of the cavalry which we have pushed to the front, that the enemy is on the whole considerably weaker than ourselves, and also that he has no marked superiority in either of the auxiliary arms, we shall be bound, in accordance with these conditions of strength, to conduct our offensive operations with greater boldness and expedition; and we shall be justified in carrying to an extreme the principle of, if possible, attacking *one* of the enemy's flanks by assailing *both* flanks at the same time. The danger of every such attempt at turning both flanks of an enemy consists in the chance of being ourselves attacked and broken through during this turning movement, or of our not being able to concentrate sufficient force for producing a decisive result on either of the points assailed; but such considerations are entirely out of place under the supposed conditions of the strength and composition of the opposing forces. A concentrated attack upon one wing of the weaker enemy would be a safer but probably not so decisive a proceeding. The advantages, however, of both modes of attacking (that on one and on both flanks), will be combined by concentrating the whole of our artillery and cavalry against the enemy's most sensitive flank (that on which is his line of retreat, or by which he communicates with other portions of his force), so as to reap the fruits of victory, should our attack be successful, by pursuing where the result is likely to be decisive.

We must remark that a direct frontal attack and an attempt to pierce the line of an enemy, even when very inferior in numbers, will have a considerable chance of being unsuccessful, for the enemy will in such a case be able to make full use of his fire, which may possibly check the assault of even a superior force; besides which, even if such an attack succeeds, the losses of the assailant will be out of all proportion to the result.

A *Division* is advancing to assail the right flank of a position held by the enemy. Our detachment is ordered to attack quickly a detachment of the enemy whose presence has been signalled on our left flank, to break it and, if possible, to separate it from the main body.

The detachment told off for this purpose marches at the head of the main body of the *Division* in the following order: two squadrons, **3 Bat.**, the battery, **2 & 1 Bats.**

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

A few shots drop into our left flank.

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49th Example.

Fig. 1.

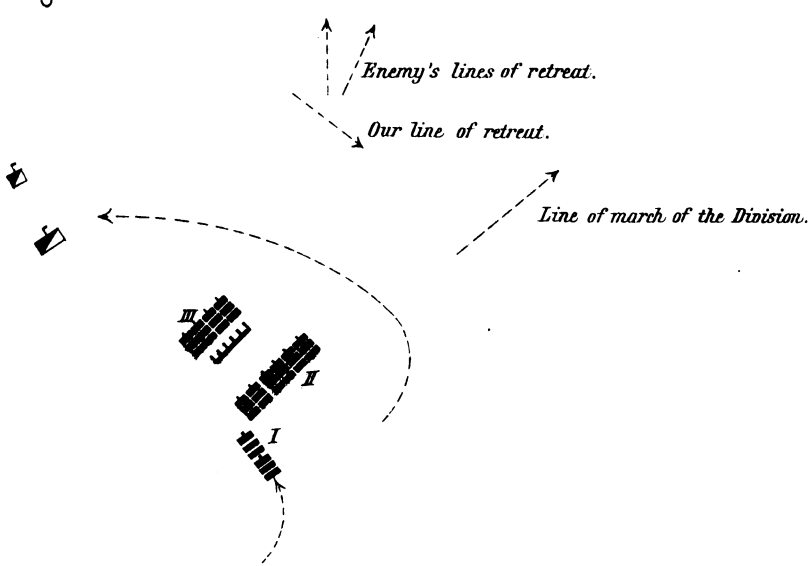

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Fig. 2.

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As soon as the battalion has been informed of its destination as above given,

Dispositions:

The Cavalry. Both squadrons move quickly to the left flank and reconnoitre.

3 Bat. Wheels to the left and, after advancing 500 paces, forms line of contiguous company columns.

The Battery. Follows **3 Bat.**

2 & 1 Bats. Follow the battery in line of contiguous company columns; **1 Bat.** on the left.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

Our scouts are fired upon by infantry and cavalry patrols of the enemy, which, however, quickly withdraw; the scouts believe that they can make out about a battalion in position; the enemy fires some shells against the main body of our cavalry.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Two companies are pushed forward 300 paces, opening out into line of divisions preparatory to extending; the other two companies follow in second line; the whole advance.

The Battery. Takes ground to the right 600 paces, and moves forward into line with the rear companies of **3 Bat.**

1 & 2 Bats. Follow in their last-named formation at a distance of 400 paces from the second line.

Third Period.

The enemy opens a pretty sharp fire upon our skirmishers (as they rush forward) from the position M–N (to be marked) upon a front of about 700 paces; two companies in close order appear behind each wing of the enemy's skirmishers; two guns also, covered by some cavalry, are posted behind his left wing and open fire upon our battalions at a range of 2,000 paces.

The following caution is given whilst on the march to the commandants and battery commander: 'The detachment will envelop and attack the enemy.'

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Advances against his front; three companies extend.

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2 Bat. Attacks the enemy's left wing, moving on M (an object indicated).

1 Bat. Attacks the right wing, moving on N (an object indicated).

The Battery Advances quickly from 600 to 800 paces and unlimbers; two guns fire upon the enemy's artillery and the remaining four upon the position occupied by his infantry.

The Cavalry. Retires slowly; one division in observation on the left flank, the remainder on the right rear of the battery. The whole step out.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's infantry begins a very effective fire at 700 paces distance; his guns direct their fire exclusively upon **2 Bat.**

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Advances by successive rushes to within 300 paces of the enemy's position.

2 Bat. Four divisions extend } and step out.

1 Bat. Four divisions extend }

The Cavalry. Advances to attack as soon as the infantry is at close quarters with the enemy.

The Battery. Increases the rapidity of its fire.

Fifth Period.

The enemy withdraws his guns—his infantry also seems about to quit the position.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance'

(Even if **1 & 2 Bats.** have not yet come into line).

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy does not await our attack, but goes to the rear in a great hurry. As soon as we have reached points M and N,

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

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Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

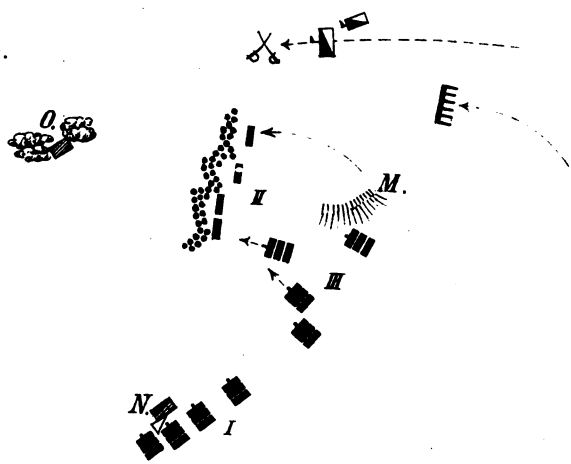

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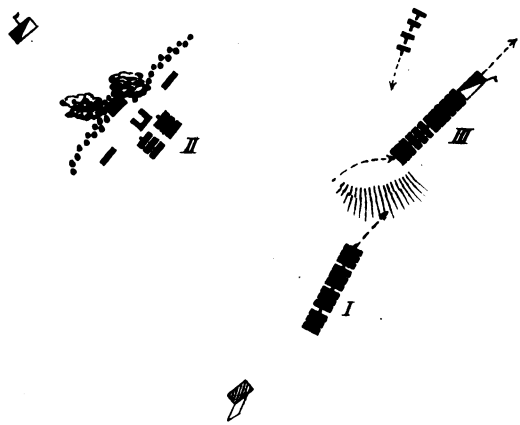
Fig. 5.



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Dispositions:

2 Bat. Continues to advance, taking up the pursuit and changing front half-left towards O (object to be indicated).

3 Bat. Assembles; two companies follow the left wing of **2 Bat.**

1 Bat. Assembles and stands fast in position.

The Battery. Gallops forward and fires upon the retreating enemy.

The Cavalry. Advances and charges.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy continues his retreat without a check, seeking to rejoin his main body further to the rear.

Our detachment receives orders to observe the enemy with one battalion, two guns, and a squadron, whilst the remainder take the direction of the *Division*.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Stands fast and observes the enemy, two guns and a squadron being attached to it; the commandant makes the necessary dispositions.

The main body of the detachment takes the direction followed by the *Division*.

3 Bat. Moves off to the right in column of route.

The Battery. Follows **3 Bat.**, detaching two guns to **2 Bat.**

The Cavalry. One squadron remains with **2 Bat.**, and the other moves at the head of **3 Bat.**

1 Bat. Follows the battery in column of route.

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50th EXAMPLE.

3 BATTALIONS, 4 GUNS, AND 1 SQUADRON

AGAINST

6 BATTALIONS, 6 GUNS, AND 3 SQUADRONS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

Unless the commander of a detached force has for some particular reason been positively ordered to attack the enemy wherever he falls in with him, and, if he is too weak to do this, to hold him in check at any cost for a certain time at least, he will do better, as soon as he has ascertained that the enemy has a considerable superiority of numbers, to retire upon his reinforcements or into a favourable defensive position. He would be assuming a serious responsibility by *always* attacking or by *never* choosing to retire without being seriously compromised. Not to mention that there is a certain physical limit to the power of conducting a systematic defence, the commander-in-chief would in such case often be forced to expend the troops held in reserve for an object which does not at all harmonise with his original plan of action, rather than sacrifice a part of his force engaged contrary to his intentions against superior numbers. All the same, there may be cases in which a detached force must hold out even to the last extremity against great odds. Such cases, however, as may be easily understood, cannot be made the subjects of tactical exercise in peace time, principally because the moral element, which will mainly contribute to the result in war, is here of no effect.

Our detachment has been despatched some hours' march beyond the outposts of a *Division* just preparing to bivouac, so as, if possible, to occupy a defile which the latter will have to pass next day. We have received information that the enemy is showing some cavalry and a small force of infantry on this side of the defile.

Our detachment is in order of march: Advanced body, one squadron; Support, **1 Bat.**; Main body, **2 & 3 Bats.**

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy shows a force of cavalry superior to our own.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Pushes forward two companies; the enemy's cavalry is close at hand.

2 Bat. Keeps on advancing; company columns on the right of the road.

3 Bat. Also keeps moving on; company columns on the left of the road.

The Battery. Remains on the road.

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50th Example.

Fig. 1.

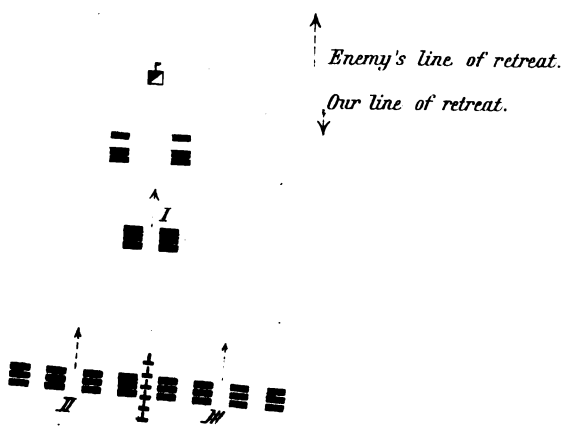

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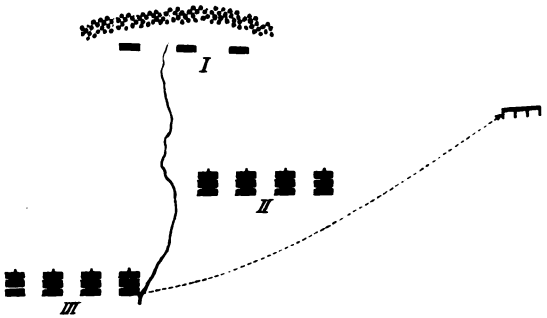
Fig. 2.



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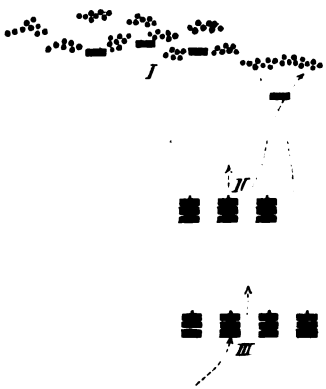
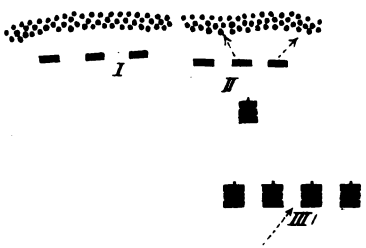


Fig. 4.



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Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's cavalry retires slowly; our detachment comes under artillery fire; the enemy has a battery in position in front of the defile with bodies of skirmishers on each side of the battery.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. In first line; three companies extend.

2 Bat. In second line; 300 paces behind the right wing of **1 Bat.**

3 Bat. Follows for the present at 200 paces in rear of the second line along the road.

The Battery. Looks out a good position on the right front and opens fire.

The Squadron. Retires and takes post on the right of the battery.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy seems to have three battalions of infantry.

Our commander determines to attack the enemy's left wing.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Attacks the enemy's left wing, advancing by successive rushes; the right wing is reinforced by one company of **2 Bat.**

2 Bat. Joins in the attack and continues to advance.

3 Bat. Also joins in the attack, acting as main body, and moving as quickly as possible to within 200 paces in rear of **2 Bat.**

The Battery. Joins in the attack, directing its fire only on the point assailed, viz. the enemy's left wing.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

A considerable body of the enemy's infantry and some cavalry are seen to be advancing through the defile. We estimate the force of infantry at, to say the least, from two to three battalions.

As the enemy's reinforcements are already nearer his fighting line than our detachment, our commander determines to stop his attack.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

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Dispositions:

2 Bat. Two companies extend to prolong the line of **1 Bat.** to the right; one company follows in rear.

3 Bat. Moves up to within 300 paces of the right wing of the skirmishers.

The Battery. Fires upon the entrance of the defile.

The movement in advance is arrested.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's reinforcements having come up, he begins to make a decided advance.

Dispositions:

1 Bat. Retires slowly to point A (to be indicated), and then halts.

3 Bat. Takes ground to the right until overlapping **2 Bat.**; two companies extend.

The Battery. Directs its fire against the enemy's front line.

Sixth Period.

The enemy concentrates the greater part of his reinforcements behind his left wing, and fires principally upon our artillery.

Dispositions:

2 Bat. Retires slowly until in line with **1 Bat.**

3 Bat. Follows as soon as **2 Bat.** has taken post.

The Battery. Retires by successive divisions 600 paces.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy's cavalry advances against our right wing.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. Receives the caution 'the enemy's cavalry is advancing.'

The Squadron. Charges as soon as the enemy's cavalry comes under our infantry fire.

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Fig. 5.

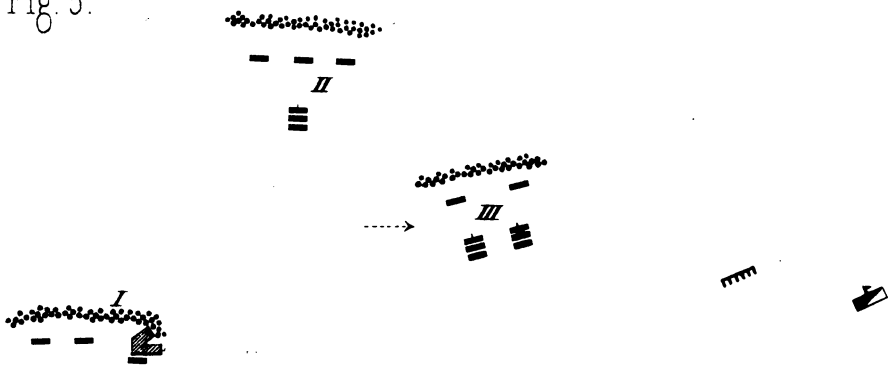

Fig. 6.

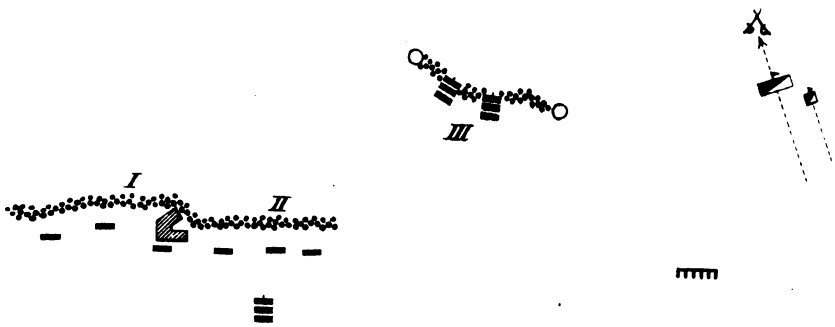

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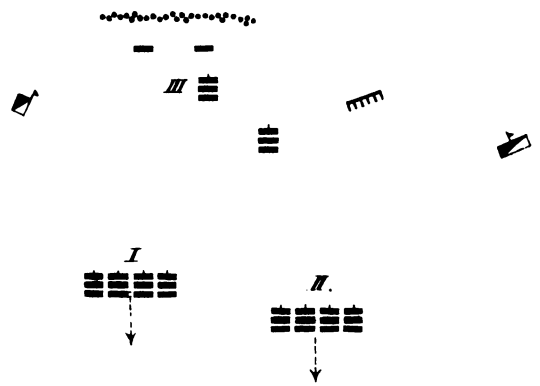
Fig. 7.



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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy's cavalry is repulsed and his infantry pursues us no further.

Dispositions:

3 Bat. With the squadron and battery attached to it, covers the retreat; the commandant makes all necessary dispositions; it follows the main body leisurely.

2 & 1 Bats. Retire slowly, after 600 paces closing into company columns.

The Battery & The Squadron. Are attached to **3 Bat.** to cover our further retreat.

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51st EXAMPLE.

A BRIGADE OF 4 BATTALIONS (2 REGIMENTS EACH OF 2 BATTALIONS) FORMING PART OF A DIVISION ON THE OFFENSIVE.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The general principles for attack and defence remain unchangeable under all conditions.

In treating, however, as we shall now do, of operations on a larger scale, we shall have to modify the manner in which these principles are carried out, both on account of the considerable space taken up by the larger bodies of troops, and also because it is impossible for their commander to enter into every detail—nor indeed ought he to do so; but he must content himself with a precise statement of the task assigned to each corps and, at the outside, with a short allusion to the special object to be attained in performing the task. But from the very modifications produced by this increased space and more general direction arise two other conditions, which must always be kept in view, and which, although to a certain extent of a technical nature, are of no less importance and exercise no less influence upon the general result than do the tactical principles.

The first condition is that a considerable body of troops can only receive its definitive destination and direction when the commander-in-chief is perfectly clear as to his own intentions, and has made up his mind as to the most probable design to be attributed to the enemy under existing circumstances.

When the commander shifts and changes his views and objects, and the troops in consequence receive orders and counter orders, although indeed it may be technically possible to carry out the latter—that is, with reference to time and space—yet such change of purpose on actual service, in presence of the enemy and under the moral influence of battle, will generally be the first and irremediable step towards defeat.

When once a considerable body of troops is put in movement to gain a particular object, the task assigned to it should as a rule never be altered: if, for example, we should only discover during the actual prosecution of an attack that the direction chosen is unfavourable, and that another one would be far preferable, we must, instead of stopping the movement or changing the direction, reinforce and support this attack, ill-directed though it may be, with all the troops which we have at hand, thus at least making up for our over hasty and probably on that account bad choice of the point of attack, by a full use of all our strength.

The second condition is that inferior officers, captains inclusive, should at once understand what is being done, and in consequence should on the receipt of simple cautions at once, as it were instinctively, comprehend the character of the task assigned to them and the right means of performing it.

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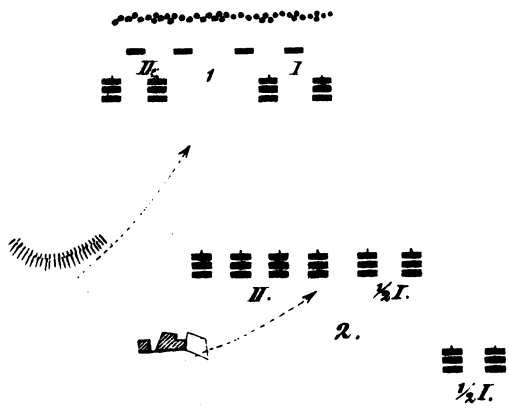
51st Example.

Fig 1.



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Such cautions as the following: 'The regiment, the brigade, will occupy this or that position and defend it obstinately;' or 'the regiment will make its attack on that point or that section,' &c.; or 'the regiment, the brigade, will follow the column of attack as general reserve,' &c.

Such cautions, we repeat, should be quite sufficient at once to give officers of all ranks a clear conception of what they have to perform and of the measures corresponding to each special task to be taken without hesitation or delay.

The question whether regiments belonging to the same brigade should be brought into action behind each other or by the side of one another cannot be answered dogmatically; the circumstances which have immediately preceded the action of the brigade, together with the nature of the ground, will generally decide the point. Should circumstances allow of complete independence as to the relative position of each regiment, the character of the task assigned to the brigade will alone decide the question. A brigade told off to make an attack will place one regiment in first and second line, keeping the other regiment as the main attacking body and the reserve. The first regiment has then a precise task assigned to it, which task can be best performed by one leader; upon the second also devolves one principal task, viz. that of dealing and following up the great blow or of parrying a counter-stroke; unity of command will thus be of great importance, and will be attained most effectually by the employment of one leader. When on the defensive, a brigadier had better perhaps place his regiments side by side, assigning to each the section which it has to defend, and making each provide for its own local reserve. In no case is it of much importance whether regiments fight side by side or behind one another, if only every colonel and commandant knows what the brigade, and therefore what he himself, has to do.

The first brigade of an infantry *Division* (6 battalions) has already had four of these for some time in action; the divisional artillery is assembled on the right in a favourable position, where also is the greater part of the divisional cavalry. The second brigade (4 battalions) is still about 1,800 paces in rear of the advanced skirmishing line, and covered by two objects (clump of trees, eminence, or such like).

The lieutenant-general sends the following order: '**2 Brigade** will advance and attack the enemy's left wing between M and N; three batteries of artillery will at the same time direct their fire against the same section; two battalions of **1 Brigade** will follow in rear of the right wing of **2 Brigade** as general reserve.'

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy has apparently not as yet remarked our brigade; at any rate, we have not yet come under artillery fire.

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Caution to colonels and commandants: 'The brigade has to attack the enemy's left wing and to carry the section between M and N; two battalions of **1 Brigade** will follow in rear of the right as general reserve.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. The two battalions side by side, each with one half-battalion in first line and the other in second line.

2 Regiment. One battalion and a half-battalion as main body at 300 paces in rear of the second line of the right battalion of **1 Regiment**; the other half-battalion in reserve at 200 paces from the main body, and overlapping its right.

The right wing of **1 Regiment** will take the general direction N, the left wing will move on M; the whole of **2 Regiment** will take the direction of the enemy's point of appui N. The battalions will at once advance; I shall be with the main body.'

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

After **1 Regiment** has advanced about 500 paces the enemy remarks the movement of our brigade, and directs the fire of two batteries principally on **1 Regiment**.

The colonel of **1 Regiment** orders each company in first line to extend two divisions, and the second line to deploy.

The colonel of **2 Regiment** forms the main body into line of company columns at full interval.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Reinforces the right wing of the first line with two companies.

2 Regiment. Two companies from the main body are pushed quickly forward into second line in rear of the right wing.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy's skirmishers on his threatened left wing appear to have been strongly reinforced.

The skirmishers of our brigade have nearly come up to those of **1 Brigade** already engaged; we are still about 700 paces from the enemy's skirmishing line.

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Fig. 2.

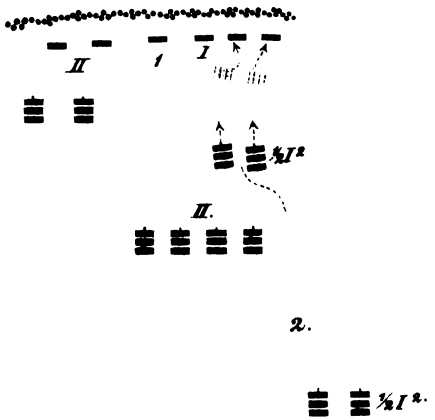

Fig. 3.

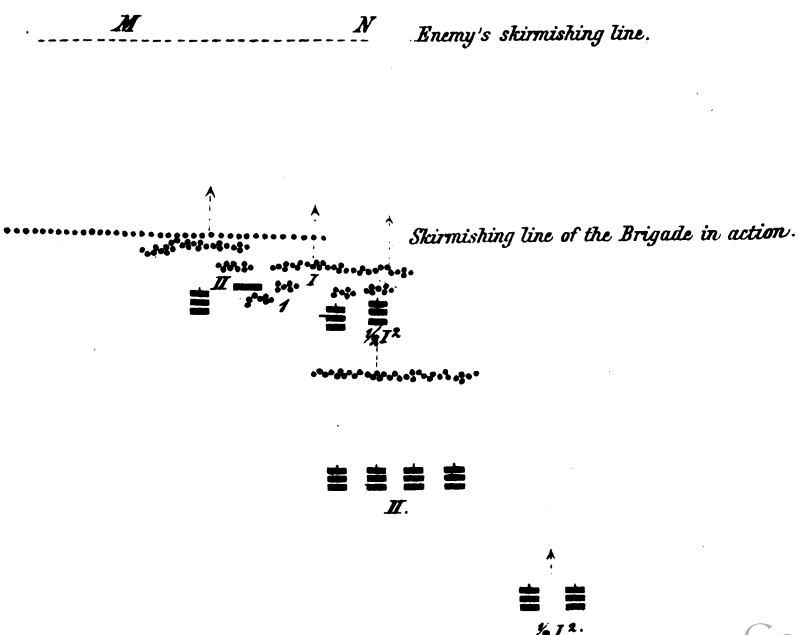

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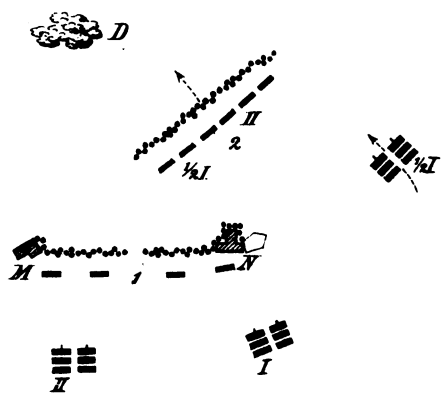
Fig. 4.



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The first line of **1 Regiment** advances by successive rushes almost up to 400 paces from the enemy's skirmishing line; the supports and part of the second line reinforce skirmishers. **2 Regiment** continues to advance.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Each company of the main body extends a division; the reserve follows at 200 paces distance, overlapping the right wing by 200 paces.

Fourth Period.

Although the enemy increases his fire to the utmost, some of his men seem to be breaking away from the skirmishing line.

As soon as the main body has reached the first line,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy seems to be abandoning the position.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance Quickly.'

As soon as the points M and N are reached,

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Pursues, moving on D.

1 Regiment. Occupies the captured position; two companies of each battalion assemble.

Sixth Period.

The enemy is rallied by fresh forces further to the rear.

We receive the following order: '**2 Brigade** will halt and occupy the line M—N; the divisional cavalry and artillery will take up the pursuit.'

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Halts, then retires slowly and takes post in reserve in rear of **1 Regiment**, which has occupied the line M—N.

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52nd EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 4 BATTALIONS, 1 BATTERY, AND 2 SQUADRONS, FORMING PART OF A DIVISION ON THE OFFENSIVE.

TACTICAL IDEA.

When detachments of the two sister arms are attached to a brigade specially for certain phases of an action, they will be used exclusively to attain the object assigned to the brigade, and will be employed each arm according to its peculiar characteristics.

A battery attached to a brigade to support it in the prosecution of an attack must therefore use its whole endeavours to facilitate this operation. Hence it must direct its fire solely upon the point of entry which has been determined upon and made known; no reply must be made to the enemy's artillery fire; shortly before the critical moment of the actual assault the guns must be taken on to within the most effective range; if the position is carried and the enemy gives way, the battery must again push onwards with all vigour, so as to follow up the retreating enemy with its fire; or if the attack fails, it must be prepared even to sacrifice itself, covering the retreat of the broken infantry, thus enabling them soon to halt and rally, and keeping off the pursuing enemy.

The cavalry attached to the brigade, whose strength consists in its mobility and offensive power, must secure to a good distance the exposed flank of the assailant, throwing itself recklessly without orders against any of the enemy making a counter attack, so as at least to check them; and when the time comes for improving the victory, it must again without orders take advantage of every opportunity to fall upon the retreating foe, so as to gain ground for the infantry which is following behind it, and to enable the latter to continue its pursuing fire as far as possible beyond the position which it has carried. The sister arms must be well informed as to the peculiar tactical characteristics of the different periods of combat, as without this they will not be able to take the initiative according to the nature and spirit of each arm; if cavalry and artillery were to wait at all times for instructions or orders, the right moment for action would pass before they could take advantage of it.

One brigade (7 battalions) of a *Division* has already been for some time obstinately engaged; the lieutenant-general determines to direct his attack against the enemy's right wing before the latter has received the reinforcements which our cavalry announces to be approaching.

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52nd Example.

Fig. 1.

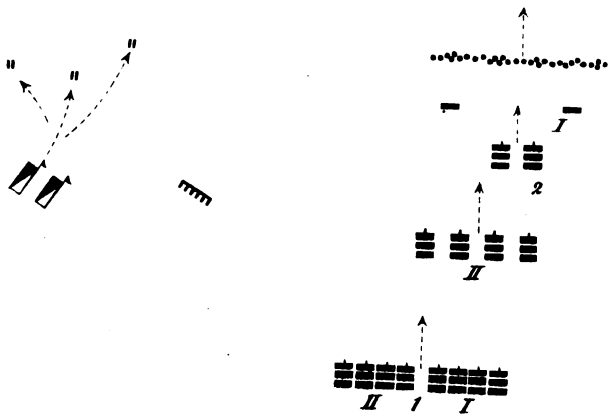
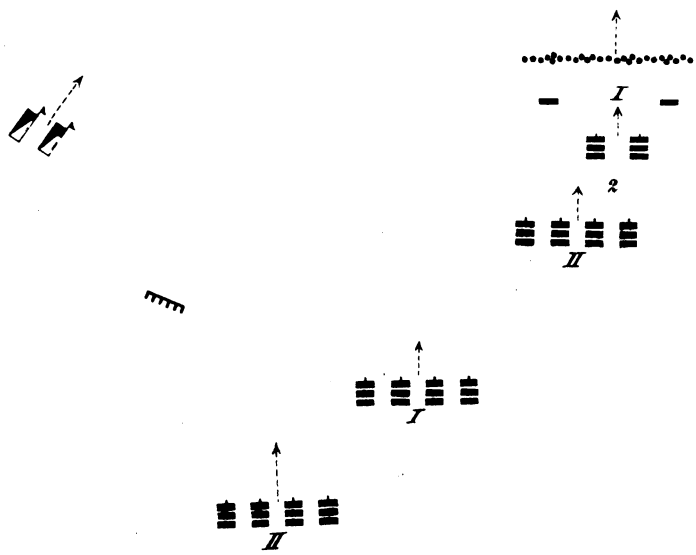


Fig. 2.



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2 Brigade is massed under cover 1,200 paces in rear of the left wing of the brigade already in action; a battery of the divisional artillery has just come up, having followed the infantry.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy, having remarked the arrival of the battery, directs a sustained fire of artillery against the position of our brigade.

The lieutenant-general sends the following order: 'Reinforcements are reported to be approaching the enemy's left wing; **2 Brigade** will attack his right wing at point A (a farm building, a hamlet, small wood, or such like); one regiment will be kept as general reserve behind the left wing; the two squadrons, which are securing the left flank, and the battery which has just arrived, will be attached to the brigade; the attack must be made with all speed.'

Dispositions:

Brigade Caution. To the colonels and commandants, also to the battery commander and the leader of the two squadrons: 'Some reinforcements are approaching the left wing of the enemy; the brigade will carry that point A.

2 Regiment. Will carry out the attack.

1 Regiment. Will remain for the present in rear as general reserve, following and overlapping the left wing.

The Cavalry. Will observe the enemy's reinforcements which are approaching, keeping them back if possible; it will itself attack if **2 Regiment** is successful.

The Battery. Will keep up a heavy fire to prepare the attack, taking post on the left front. I shall be with the main body (**2 Regiment**).'

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy, remarking the advance of the brigade, at once directs a heavy fire of artillery upon it.

1 Bat. of **2 Regiment** has been told off as first and second line, and **2 Bat.** as main body.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **2 Bat.** follows as left echelon at 200 paces distance from **1 Bat.** in company columns at full interval.

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Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

We notice some movements behind the enemy's right wing which, judging from its sharp fire, seems to have been reinforced.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. The second line moves up to prolong and reinforce the left wing of the first line, being relieved by detachments from the main body.

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** moves up at the double to reinforce the main body. **2 Bat.** remains in reserve.

The colonel takes command of the main body.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

We see two columns of the enemy coming on at a considerable distance, one moving towards his right wing and the other against our left flank.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **2 Bat.** moves to the left to occupy the line R—S; the approaching column of the enemy is checked; the attack is carried on.

2 Regiment. Advances till within 400 paces of the enemy's position; two companies of the second line are brought up on the left to turn the enemy's right flank.

The Battery. Moves up to within 1,000 paces of A.

The Cavalry. Half a squadron is detached to **2 Bat.** of **1 Regiment**; the remainder joins in the attack.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy extends his last supports to reinforce the right wing of his skirmishers, whilst the column which is approaching that wing appears to quicken its movements.

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Fig. 3.

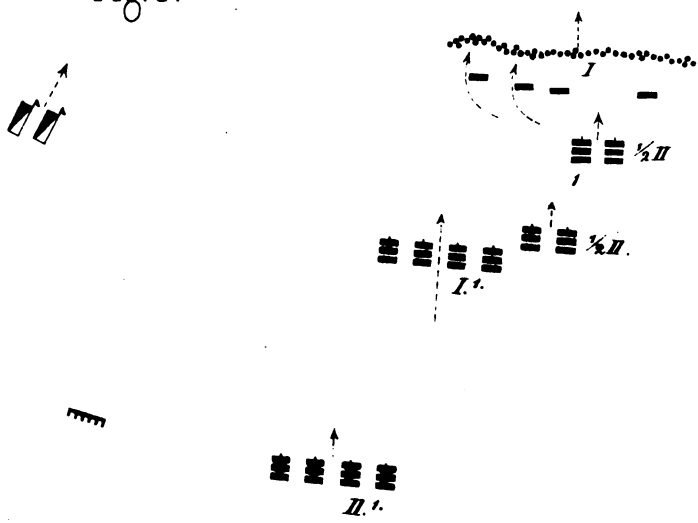

Fig. 4.

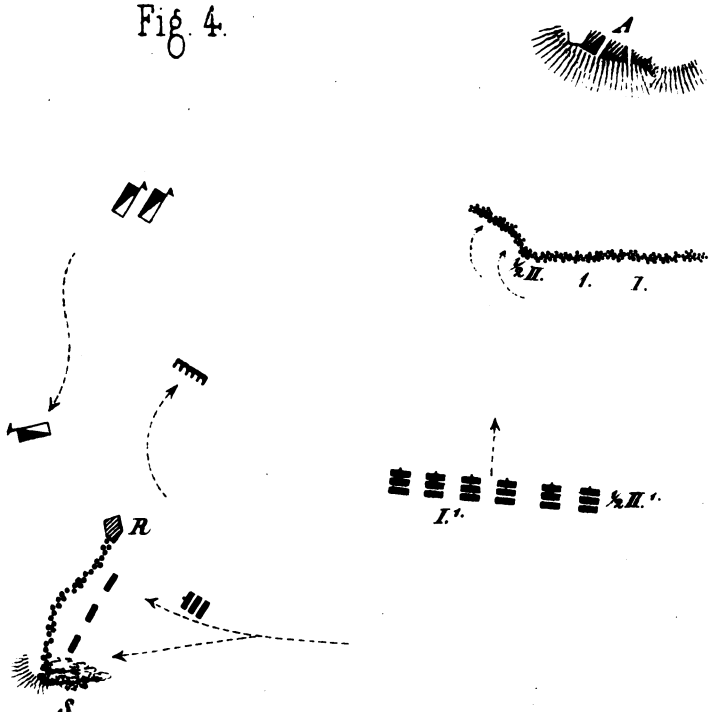

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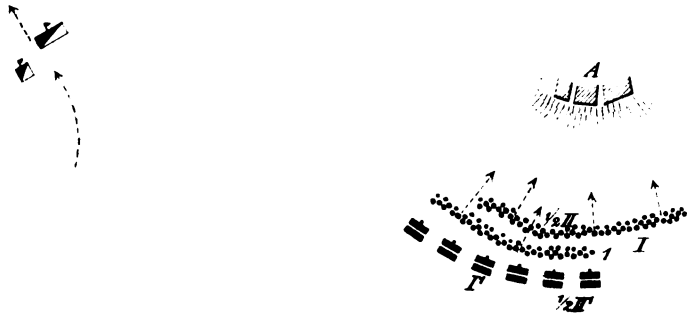
Fig. 5.



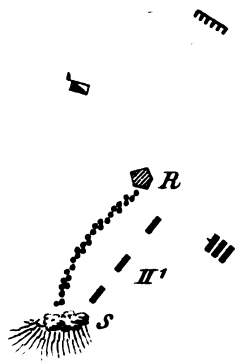
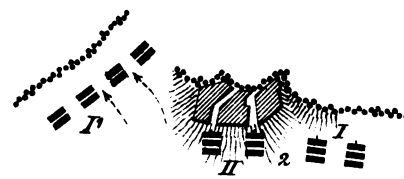
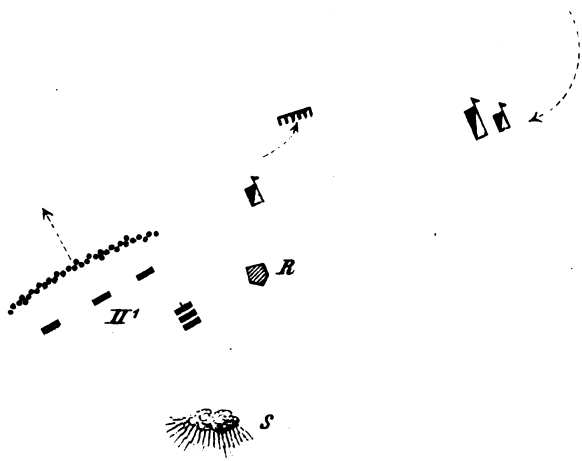


Fig. 6.





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Dispositions:

The Cavalry. Checks the approaching column of the enemy.

1 Regiment. Each company of the main body extends one division; as soon as the main body has come within 100 paces of the front skirmishing line,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Sixth Period.

One of the enemy's columns has been brought to a halt momentarily by our cavalry; the other weaker column also halts when it comes upon **2 Bat.** of **1 Regiment** and seems about to retire.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance Quickly.'

Seventh Period.

(*Fig* 6.)

The enemy's right wing abandons its position, but the approaching column has again put itself in movement covered by a dense line of skirmishers.

The commandants of **1 Bat. 1 Regiment** and of **1 Bat. 2 Regiment,** also two captains and six division leaders of each of the three battalions engaged in the attack, fall out.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Occupies the position which it has carried, and prepares to hold it obstinately,

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** moves off towards the left flank; **2 Bat.** receives orders also to advance.

The Battery. Directs its fire against the column of the enemy which is approaching from the left.

The Cavalry. Assembles near the battery.

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Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy having abandoned his main position, the column which was coming up in support also retires; meanwhile the troops which have been driven from their position have gained time to make an orderly retreat.

The lieutenant-general sends the following order: 'The brigade will occupy the position at A, and prepare to hold it obstinately; the battery and one squadron will remain attached to the brigade, the other squadron will observe the enemy's columns which were moving against us.'

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Halts, and assembles; **1 Bat.** taking post in rear of the left wing of **2 Regiment**, and behind it **2 Bat.** in reserve.

2 Regiment. Occupies the position at A, each battalion having three companies in first line and one company in second line.

The Battery. Takes post near A.

The Squadron. Behind the left flank, sending out patrols at once to the front.

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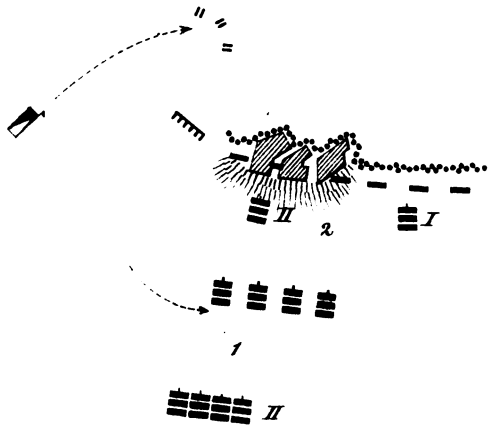
Fig. 7.



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53rd EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 4 BATTALIONS, 1 BATTERY, AND 2 SQUADRONS FORMING PART OF A DIVISION ON THE DEFENSIVE.

Tactical Idea.

When troops belonging to the sister arms are attached to a brigade on the defensive during one or more stages of a fight, they must in like manner make their action conform to the special character of each period. Whilst purely on the defensive, artillery must direct its whole fire upon the enemy's advancing infantry; and though our opponent will endeavour to divert its fire from the latter by bringing up his own guns to bear upon it, we must take care not to meet his views in this respect. It must endeavour, as far as possible, to bring a flanking fire to bear upon the enemy's infantry, and particularly upon that flank which will probably be the object of our counter attack. Should the defenders be ordered to hold the position at all cost, or should the general situation seem to demand the sacrifice, the battery must stand fast to the last; and just as the infantry must be prepared to defend their position with the bayonet as a last resource, so must the gunners be ready to use their side arms in defence of their guns.

The moral effect produced upon the defender's infantry by the retreat of his artillery from its position is already the first step towards defeat, whilst its effect upon the assailant is the first step towards victory.

The cavalry attached to the brigade must continually observe and reconnoitre, and afterwards add force and vehemence to the offensive return. It will only under peculiarly favourable circumstances find opportunities for short sallies during the purely defensive stage; at all events, it must take care not to expend its material and moral strength by premature action—for instance, by untimely attacks upon infantry remaining intact—lest it should be partially or entirely unfit for service when required at the critical moment. The assistance of the cavalry will above all be valuable in freeing the defender from a painful feeling of uncertainty by quickly enlightening him thoroughly as to the strength and dispositions of the assailant. The cavalry has, moreover, the thankful office, so important to the defence, of making the best possible preparation for the counter-stroke by ascertaining upon what point the said counter-stroke should be directed so as to be decisive.

Our brigade is in order of march: Advanced guard; Head, Support and Main body; **1 Squadron, 2 Bat.** of **2 Regiment,** and two guns; Main body of the brigade, **2 Squadron, 1 Bat.** of **2 Regiment,** four guns, **2 Bat.** and **1 Bat.** of **1 Regiment.**

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First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The advanced parties report the approach of a strong column of the enemy composed of all arms, and estimated to be about the strength of a brigade.

At the same time as this report comes in, we receive the following order from the lieutenant-general: 'The brigade will occupy as quickly as possible the line A—B, and will hold it until **2 Brigade**, which is following it, has passed the defile at O and is prepared to act offensively.'

Dispositions:

The Advanced Guard. Halts, and if it has passed the line A—B, retires upon it; occupies B and the ground on its right; the squadron and guns upon the left flank; the brigade will occupy the whole position A—B.

2 Regiment. The battalion which had hitherto formed the advanced guard has been ordered to occupy B and the ground on its right; the section B—M is assigned to the regiment; on its right will be **1 Regiment**; the brigade will at once move into position, and will defend itself obstinately.

1 Regiment. Occupies the section M—A on the immediate right of **2 Regiment.**

The Battery. Trots forward with the squadron, and looks out a position on the right near A; the two guns of the advanced guard have received orders to take post on the left near B.

The Cavalry. One squadron advances with the battery; the other squadron has received orders to take post on the left at B.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

One of the enemy's batteries opens fire against the left wing of our position, and we make out that he is reinforcing his own right wing.

Dispositions:

The Battery. One division only remains on the right, the other goes to the left.

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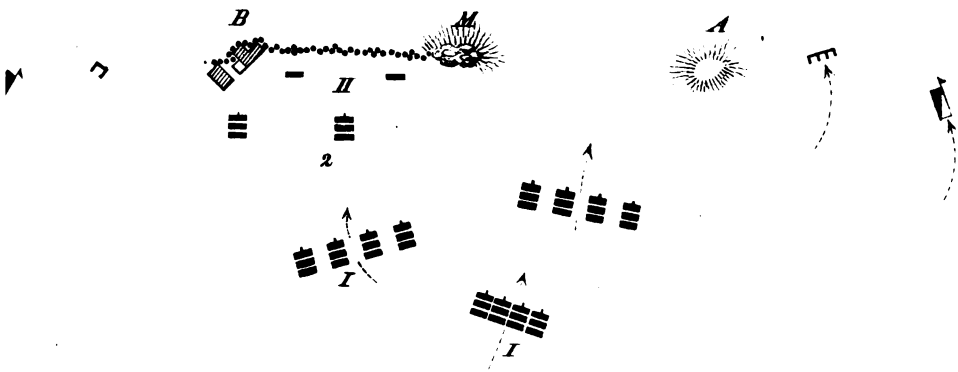
53rd Example.

Fig 1.



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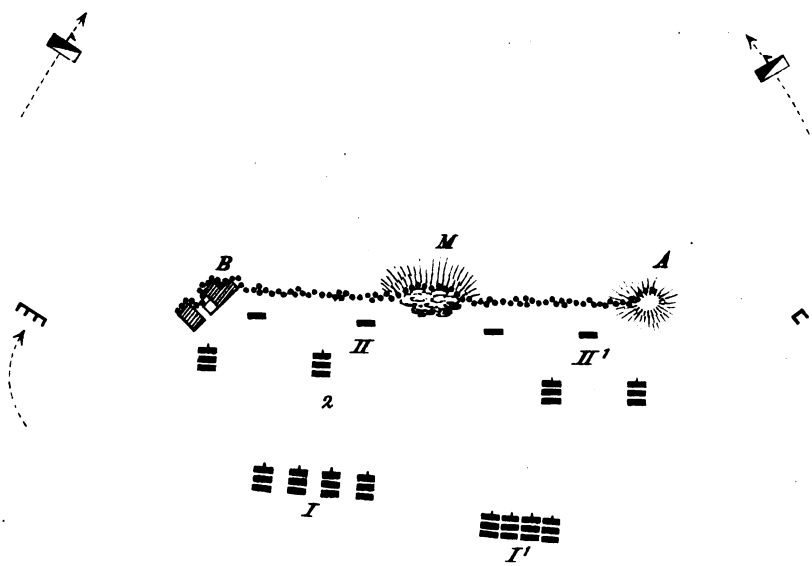

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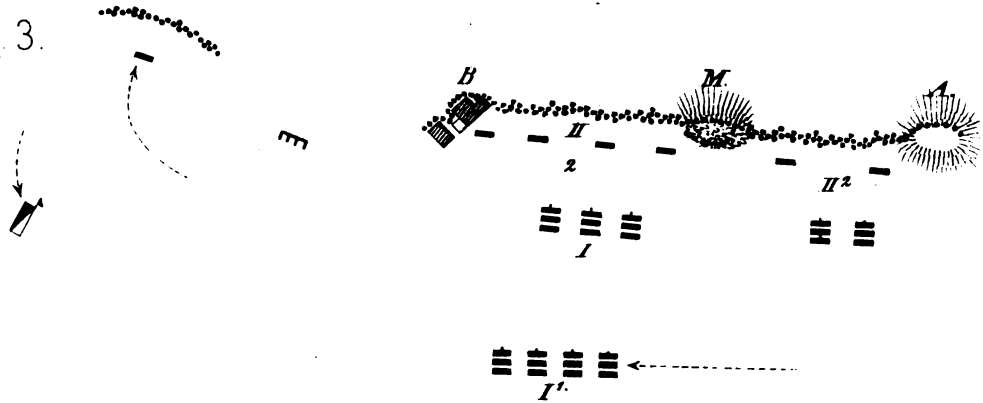
Fig. 3.



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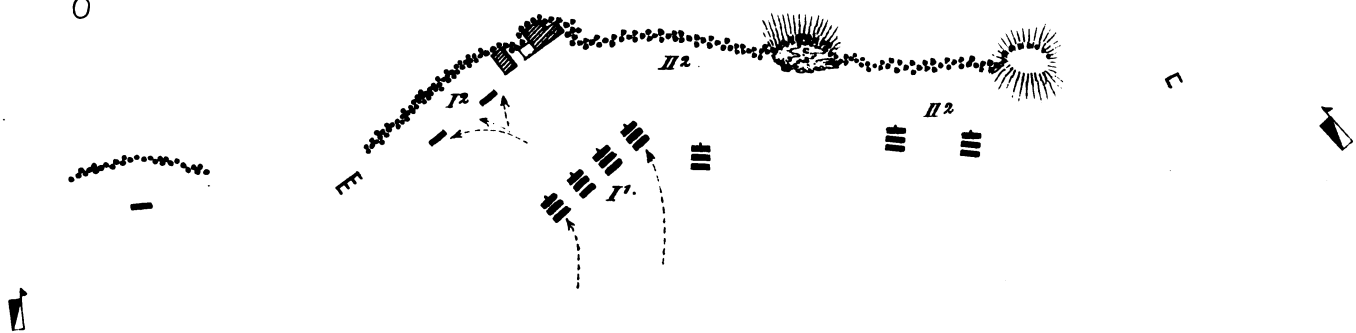

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1 Regiment. One battalion halts until the enemy's movements are well developed; the other battalion moves into the position assigned to it.

The Cavalry. Advances from both flanks and reconnoitres without attacking.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy has deployed his troops and begins to advance.

The cavalry which has been pushed forward reports that the enemy is showing four battalions on his right.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. The whole of **2 Bat.** in front line; **1 Bat.** has three companies in second line, and detaches one company as battery escort.

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** (that which has been kept back) comes as general reserve under the direct command of the brigadier, and takes post 300 paces behind the second line of the left wing. The colonel of **1 Regiment** commands the section M—A.

The Cavalry. Moves back to the flanks of the position.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy begins to turn our left flank.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Two companies from second line move up to the left wing, throwing back their left defensively.

The Battery. Changes front gradually to the left, and retires without limbering up; its infantry escort is warned of this movement.

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** advances to within 300 paces of B and changes front half-left.

The Squadron. Moves back from the left, conforming to this movement.

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Fifth Period.

The enemy seems to direct his main attack against the left flank of our brigade; he keeps pretty far away from our actual front A—B.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **2 Bat.** stands fast whilst a counter attack is being made on the left.

1 Bat. passes on the left of B to make a counter attack as soon as the enemy's right wing moves forward to assault.

2 Regiment. Stands fast in position; the reserve moves forward on the left of B and joins in the counter attack.

The Cavalry. Advances as soon as the infantry makes its attack.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's right wing advances to attack.

Dispositions: (Or prearranged signal.)

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** Advances to attack.

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy fails in debouching from his position, but stands fast there and repels the attack of our cavalry; **1 Bat.**, which had pushed forward, suffers severe loss and cannot maintain itself against the superior and vehement fire of the enemy.

(The commandant of **1 Bat. 1 Regiment**, then that of **1 Bat. 2 Regiment**, fall out; also three captains and seven lieutenants of the former battalion, one captain and three lieutenants of the latter.)

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **1 Bat.** Retires quickly and assembles in rear of B.

The Cavalry. Retires quickly and rallies on the left rear of the battery.

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The advance of **2 Brigade** of the *Division* makes itself felt by the enemy's right wing, and he retires little by little without committing himself to a serious engagement.

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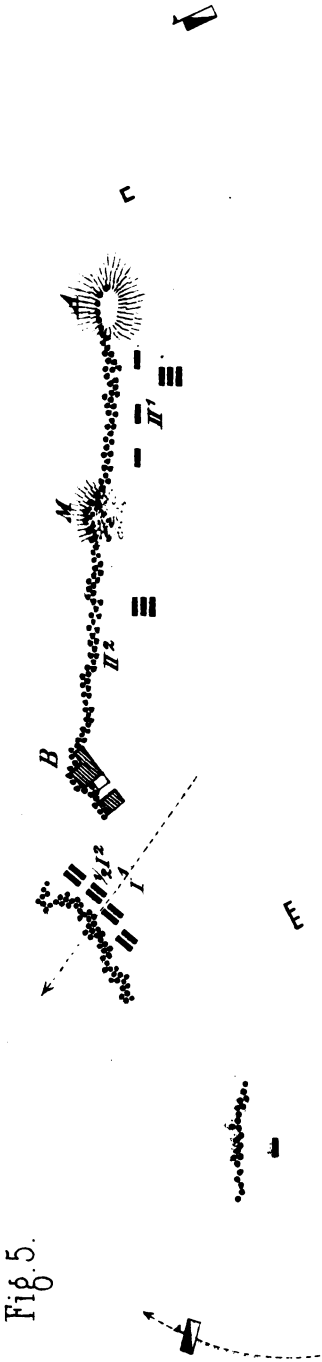

Fig. 5.

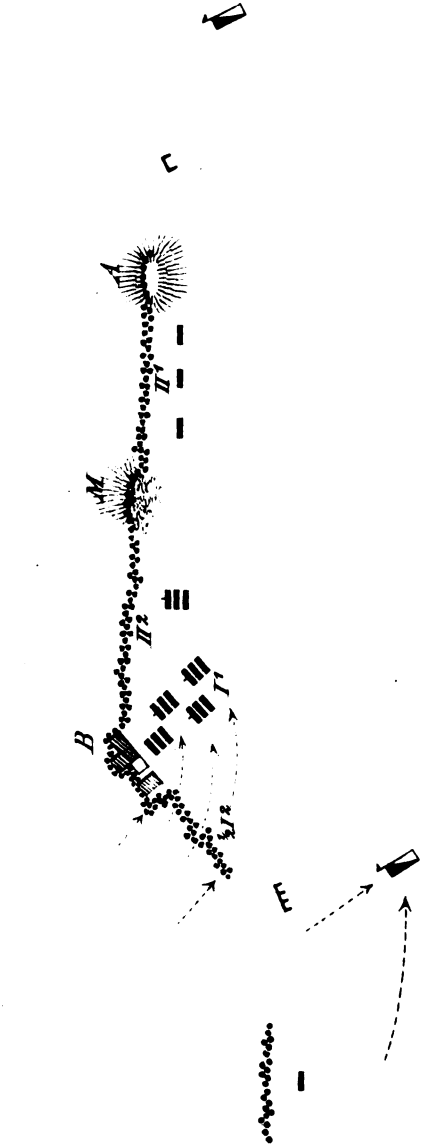

Fig. 6.

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Fig 7.

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The troops thrown back on the left of B wheel up into the main front as the enemy retreats.

Dispositions:

The Battery. Follows this movement and increases its fire.

1 Regiment. 2 Bat. assembles; the whole regiment takes post in reserve 400 paces in rear of B.

Ninth Period.

The enemy continues his retreat.

The brigade receives orders to remain for the present in position whilst the other brigade continues to advance.

Dispositions:

The Battery. Ceases firing and moves in rear of B.

2 Regiment. Stands fast, leaving only its skirmishing divisions extended.

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54th EXAMPLE.

A BRIGADE OF 6 BATTALIONS, FORMING PART OF A DIVISION ON THE OFFENSIVE.

TACTICAL IDEA.

If our opponent, although without any marked numerical superiority, attempts to turn both our flanks, and each of our wings is strong enough to withstand the attack made upon it without assistance—if, moreover, the nature of the ground is not such as peculiarly to favour the effect of the enemy's frontal fire—it will be open to our leader to direct an offensive return against his centre, and thus to break through his line. However decisive a movement of this sort may be in case of success, its execution yet offers certain difficulties; first, because the enemy can direct a concentric fire upon the assailant, with our present arms upon a front of at least 2,000 paces; and secondly, because both flanks of the latter will be seriously exposed to attack from whatever reserves the opposite party may keep in hand. It will be necessary, therefore, if we select this mode of attack on the centre, to occupy the attention of the enemy's troops stationed on each side of the point of entry by pouring into them such a heavy and well-sustained fire as to convey the impression of the preparation for a final decisive assault, thus allowing them neither time nor leisure to act against the troops making the central attack; besides which, the commander-in-chief must have thoroughly good reason for supposing that the enemy has no further reserves in rear of his centre, or at least in its immediate neighbourhood; lastly, and this is the main point, he must be certain that both his wings will be able to sustain a fresh assault, directed probably with extreme energy. When all is right as regards these matters of primary importance, and a commander is determined to break through the enemy's centre, the leader of the force told off for this purpose must always bear in mind that he is liable to be attacked on both sides at the critical moment of the actual assault.

The expression 'wedge-like' which has been adopted into military phraseology best describes the general form of this attack. The point of the wedge should not be too broad, at the outside only broad enough for the troops composing it to be able at once to swarm round the principal point of assault (be it village, wood, farm building, &c.) and to establish themselves firmly therein: upon all succeeding troops devolves next the task of securing both flanks of those immediately preceding them; hence it follows as a matter of course that the necessary subdivision of the attacking force, in order of depth (Second line, Main body, Reserve), must be combined in this case with an extended formation. We cannot know beforehand whether, and if so when, the rear lines may be called upon to act in defence of the flank in their immediate neighbourhood—this action may perhaps be called for on

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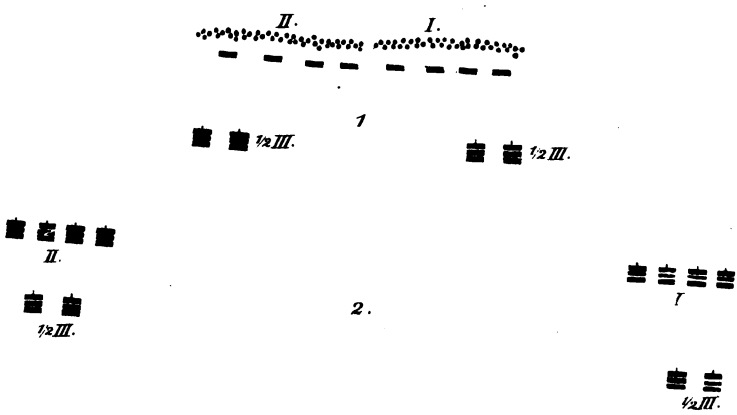
54th Example.

Fig. 1.



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one flank and not on the other: without reference to such *offensive resistance* it must be the guiding principle of all bodies of troops engaged under the supposed conditions, from the front line down to the reserve, to maintain an unbroken onward movement without check or hesitation up to the very point to be stormed; a column thus engaged in penetrating an enemy's line will always be in a critical situation, and the result aimed at, namely a division of the enemy's forces, will only be attained by the exercise of the utmost possible energy and vigour.

Three *Divisions* are engaged in obstinate combat; the enemy has made a turning movement on both flanks without effect.

Our brigade still remains completely intact in reserve, about 1,000 paces in rear of the centre of the foremost skirmishing line, and covered by a little hamlet.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The enemy's centre, in and about a small hamlet, seems now only to be in small force; the fire of six of our batteries, which has for some time been directed on this point, appears to have been very effective.

We receive the following written order: 'Repeated attacks of the enemy against both flanks have been repulsed; all his reserves appear to be in action; the brigade will advance; it will carry the place P and break through the enemy's centre; eight batteries will in the meantime direct their fire against P and neighbourhood; the attack must be pushed as rapidly as possible.'

Caution to the colonels and commandants: 'The brigade has to attack and break through the enemy's centre, and with this view that place P must be carried.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **1 & 2 Bats.** in front line; **3 Bat.** will form second line; a half-battalion behind each wing; the colonel will direct the first and second line.

2 Regiment. As main body, **1 Bat.** in rear of the right flank and **2 Bat.** in rear of the left, each at 200 paces from the second line and overlapping it by 200 paces; **3 Bat.** in reserve, with a half-battalion in rear of each wing of the main body.

The whole will at once advance.'

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Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's troops, both infantry and artillery, posted about P, direct a sharp fire against the advancing brigade, which fire is, however, replied to most vigorously by our infantry and artillery in position.

Our regiment has come up in line with the troops in position.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Makes no halt, but closes its second line upon the front at the double; supports reinforce skirmishers.

2 Regiment. The main body hastens its advance, each company throwing out a division in skirmishing order.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

Several of the enemy's squadrons move against our right flank, and some of his infantry against our left flank.

Dispositions:

The main body and reserve of the right wing halt and prepare for cavalry.

The reserve of the left wing moves forward to the left to attack the enemy's infantry in that direction.

Signal: 'Advance Quickly.'

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy is driven from P with great loss; about one battalion moves against the left wing of our brigade; the enemy's cavalry is repulsed with loss.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. **2 Bat.** takes post fronting to the left, and quickly occupies the line M—N; the other two battalions move up to join it as fast as possible.

The colonel of **2 Regiment** directs it from the left.

1 Regiment. Occupies P and prepares it for serious resistance.

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Fig. 2.

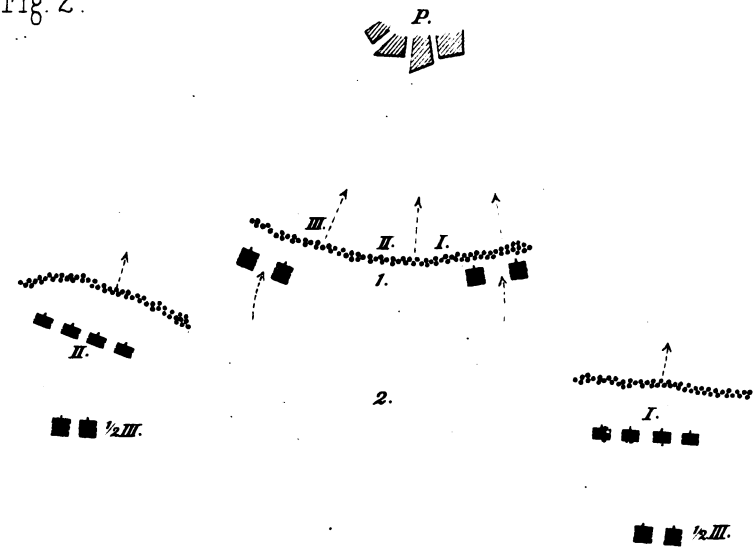
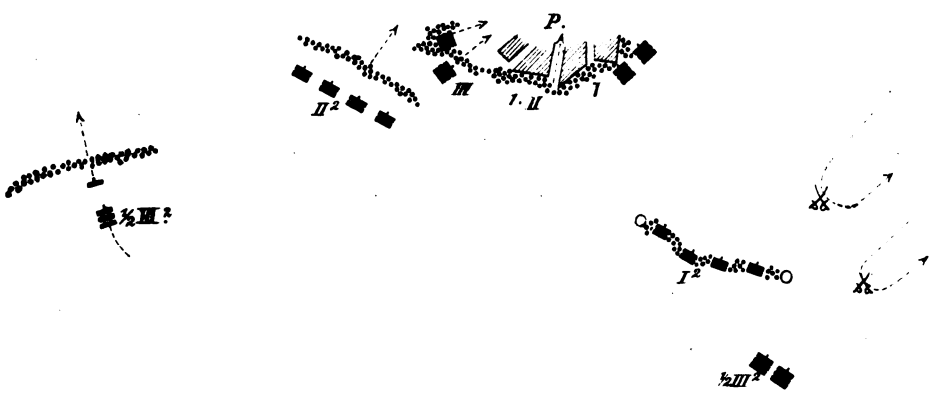


Fig. 3.



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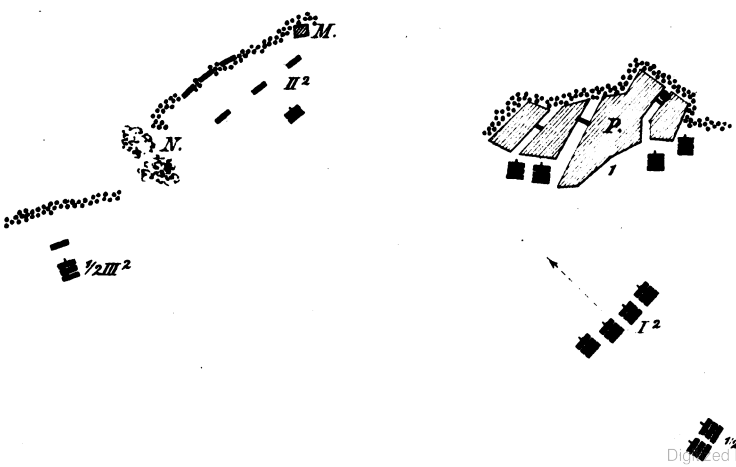

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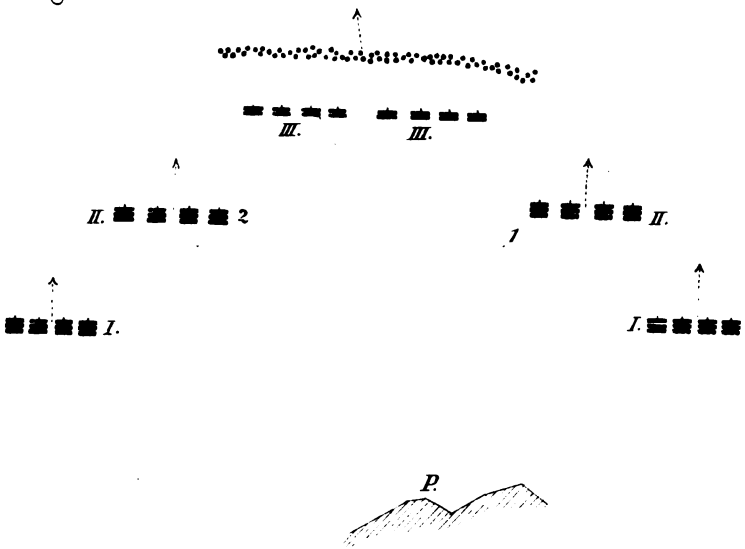
Fig. 5.



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Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy's forces retire excentrically and are pursued first by our artillery, afterwards by our united cavalry.

The brigade receives the following order: 'Assemble at B, then continue the advance so as to keep the two wings of the enemy separated.'

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Takes post behind P; one battalion in first line, another in second line, the third in reserve; a few skirmishers only being pushed to the front.

1 Regiment. In similar formation close on the right of **2 Regiment.** When the formation is complete,

Signal: 'Advance.'

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55th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 6 BATTALIONS, 2 BATTERIES, AND 3 SQUADRONS, ACTING AS ADVANCED GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

It has to some extent been adopted in theory, although not always carried out in practice, that every advanced guard should be considered capable of taking the offensive independently as soon as it comes in contact with the enemy; it should do its utmost to defeat him: what is to happen when its strength is exhausted and its action can be carried no further theory sayeth not, but the experience gained from the history of war must teach us.

Whether an advanced guard should take the offensive, remain on the defensive, or retire upon the main body, these and all other intermediate tactical measures depend in the main on the circumstances under which the advanced guard was pushed forward. These different circumstances may, to begin with, be reduced to two main groups. We will first suppose the case of an army seeking for the enemy and trying to get at him, knowing what point or ground it is going to occupy and where in all probability are the enemy's advanced posts and his actual position. We will next take the case of an army which expects no encounter with the enemy, and desires to avoid it, at least for the present.

In the first case, the advanced guard has within certain bounds (generally fixed by the enemy) a decidedly offensive mission; it must drive in the enemy's advanced posts, gaining sufficient ground for the deployment of the main body and covering this operation; afterwards, when its short offensive action is completed, being employed in the introduction of the general engagement. But an advanced guard moving at the head of a larger force, which neither expects nor seeks a collision with the enemy, will act in a totally different manner. Whilst in the above-mentioned case the advanced guard helped the commander-in-chief to carry out the intention which he had already formed of gaining some particular object, in the latter case the advanced guard will serve as the impenetrable shield behind which the commander will have time to come to a decision as to whether his main body is to act at all, and if so in what direction. The advanced guard will therefore in this case have a decidedly defensive mission, which will retain this character until the commander has determined upon assuming the offensive in the direction which has been taken; but should he for some reason or other come to a different decision, the advanced guard must either remain on the defensive (and perhaps a defensive of the most passive kind), or at the outside it will have to make demonstrations—that is to say, it will try to deceive the enemy.

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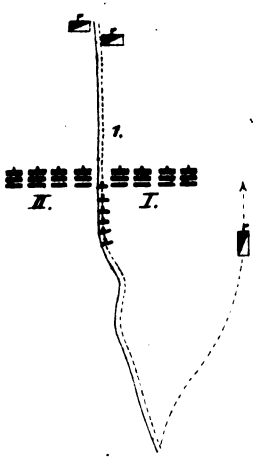
55th Example.

Fig. 1.



1 Squadron. III'
1 Battery. 1. II. III. } 2.
} in column of route (about 1700 paces deep.)

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The description of advanced guard action last noticed will therefore first consist of a well-supported and widely-extended reconnoissance, after which certain suitable points will be occupied, an impenetrable veil being thus formed to conceal the movements of the army, the advanced guard troops perhaps finally taking the offensive and commencing the general engagement.

We may deduce from the foregoing that to adopt offensive action as a general principle applicable to all advanced guards would entail very serious consequences. To justify these views, which may perhaps be objected to as damaging to the 'offensive spirit,' let us suppose the case of an army corps which has been directed to reach a certain place at a certain specified time, its doing so being decisive for the general result. The corps is marching upon one road, not expecting to meet with an enemy; the advanced guard, however, comes suddenly upon some of his troops, attacks them, at first with success, but afterwards meets with stout resistance—is itself attacked and hard pressed; it must be supported, lest it be exposed to a serious check. The army corps halts until the enemy's intentions can be ascertained. At last it becomes clear that the enemy has at this point perhaps one strong brigade, which has taken up a good position; the march can now be continued in the original direction; but some hours have been lost and, instead of bringing three brigades to the front (supposing the advanced guard to be left behind in observation of the enemy), only two, or perhaps even one, reaches its destination. If the advanced guard in this case had not pushed forward, it would probably have been directed to hold some position to the last extremity; and meanwhile the whole of the main body would have continued its march as quickly as possible on the place designated, that being the decisive point, and not the spot where the advanced guard made its attack.

Our brigade forms the advanced guard of a larger body of troops, which is intended to attack a portion of the enemy's position.

Advanced party and support: the colonel of **1 Regiment**; **1 Regiment 1 & 2 Bats.**, two squadrons, and one battery (disposed at the colonel's will).

Main body: one squadron, **1 Regiment 3 Bat.**, a battery, **2 Regiment** (three battalions).

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The cavalry scouts meet with a squadron of the enemy in close order.

The two squadrons of our support form up and advance against the enemy's squadron, which retires; we make out some stronger cavalry detachments of the enemy. The support forms up on the right and left of the road, the artillery remaining on it.

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Dispositions:

The Squadron. Belonging to the main body of the advanced guard advances and joins the other squadrons.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy shows a regiment of cavalry, and we see that further to the rear and to the right of the road a farm-house and the adjoining ground are occupied by infantry.

The three squadrons observe the enemy's cavalry; the battery attached to the support unlimbers against the object occupied by the enemy; the infantry of the support forms for attack.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy quits the point occupied and withdraws to a position which seems to be held in greater force, and from which also some artillery comes into play.

A half-battalion from the support occupies the point abandoned by the enemy and halts there in second line; the battery opens fire.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Leaves **3 Bat.** on the road as general reserve.

2 Regiment. Deploys into line of company columns on the left of the road; two battalions in first line and one in second line; the whole move forward.

The Battery. Belonging hitherto to what was the main body of the advanced guard, advances and joins the other battery.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy has taken up a good position; he shows some cavalry and has a battery in action; we estimate his strength at something more than a regiment.

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Fig. 2.

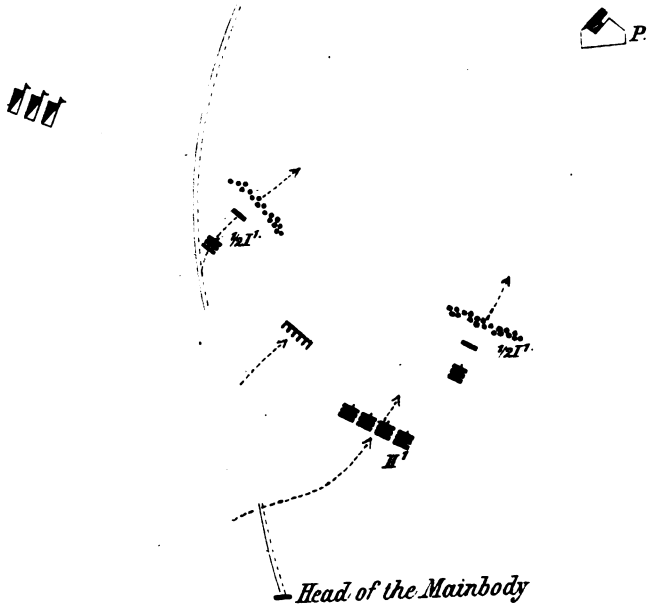

Fig. 3.

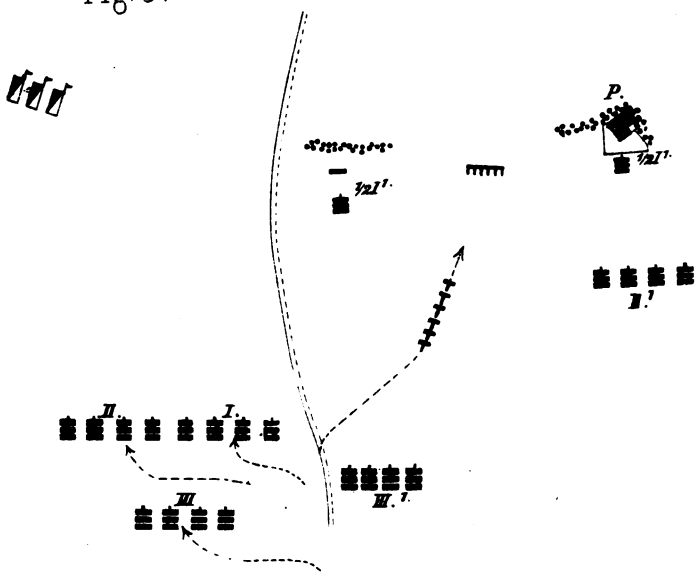

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Fig 4.

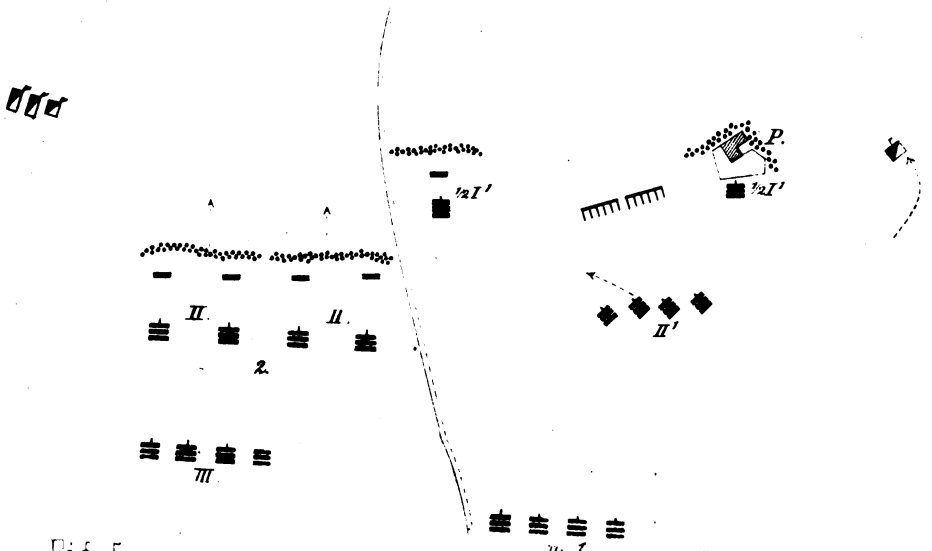
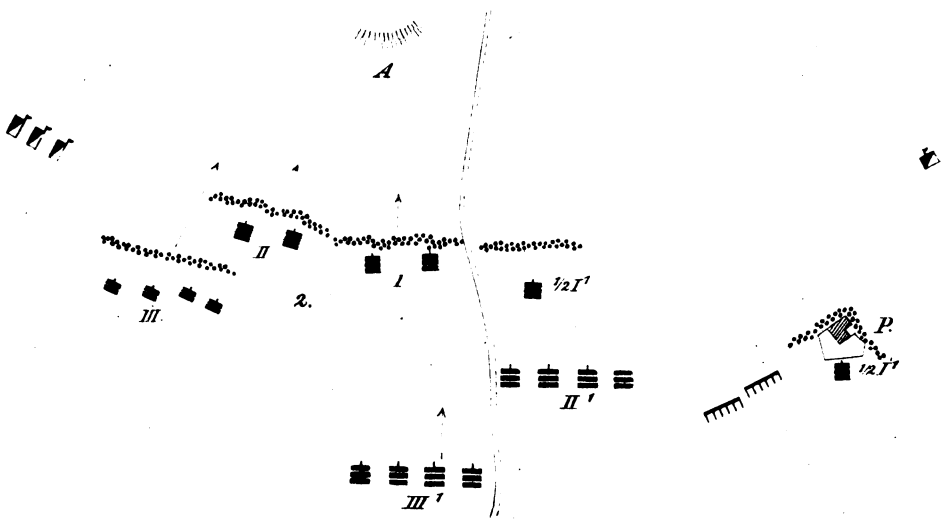


Fig. 5.



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Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Our brigade at once attacks the enemy's right wing; the battalion which is in second line moves nearer to the road; **3 Bat.** remains as general reserve.

2 Regiment. Attacks the enemy's right wing at point A, the general reserve following along the road.

The Battery. Directs its fire against the point of attack A.

The Cavalry. Half a squadron to the right in observation, the remaining two and a half squadrons on the left. Point A is attacked.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

We remark behind the advanced position, which is on the point of being attacked, the enemy's main position.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. One half-battalion occupies point P during the advance of the brigade; one and a half battalions keep in line with **2 Regiment.**

2 Regiment. The first and second lines advance to within 400 paces of the enemy's position.

1 Regiment. **3 Bat.** moves to the left of the road and follows **2 Regiment** at 300 paces distance.

The Cavalry. Keeps in line with the main body and to its left.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The skirmishing line has arrived to within 400 paces of that of the enemy.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Should it carry the enemy's position, will only pursue him with fire.

The Batteries. If the position is taken, will move up to it.

The Cavalry. Will not charge, but will observe the strong force of cavalry which the enemy shows in his main position.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

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Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy withdraws to his main position without allowing us to come to close quarters.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Occupies the position which it has captured on the left of the road; two battalions in first and second line and one battalion in reserve.

1 Regiment. Takes post on the right of the road; two battalions in first and second line. **3 Bat.** again joins the regiment and forms its reserve.

The Batteries. Remain on the right of the road and keep up a steady fire on the enemy's main position.

The Cavalry. Sends out patrols to reconnoitre the enemy's main position.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

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Fig. 6.

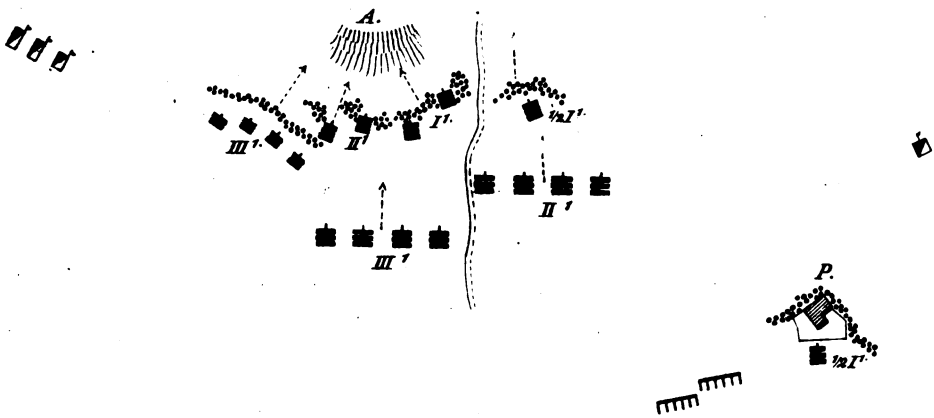
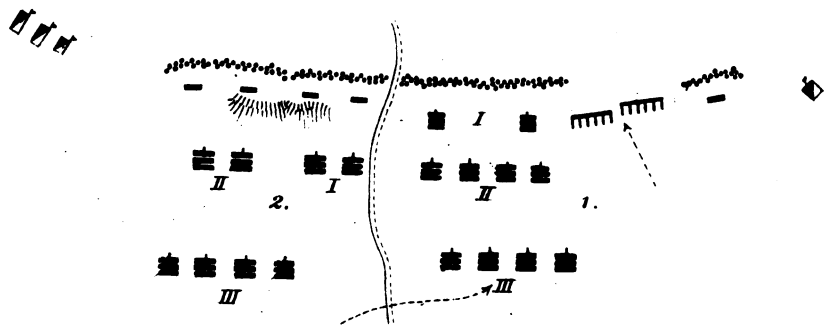


Fig. 7.



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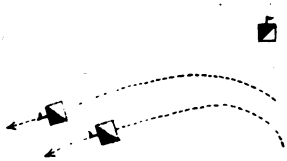
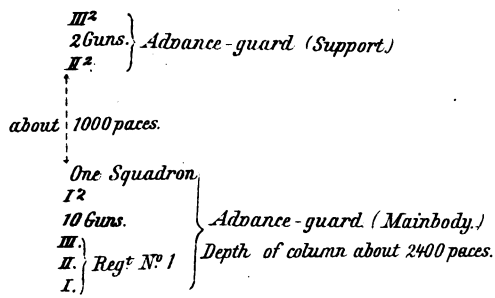
56th Example.

Fig. 1.





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56th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 6 BATTALIONS, 2 BATTERIES, AND 4 SQUADRONS, AS ADVANCED GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

As already observed, the advanced guard of a larger body of troops which neither seeks nor expects a collision with the enemy has substantially a defensive mission. Instead of attacking and thus in a measure limiting the field of view by confining it to the actual scene of combat, it must observe and reconnoitre as much as possible, for upon its observations will depend the plan which the commander-in-chief will form.

As soon therefore as an advanced guard under the supposed conditions comes unexpectedly upon the enemy, the cavalry and artillery must begin to act, the former observing, the latter giving effect to its observations; and above all to question with its fire, so as to ascertain, if replied to, whence the answer comes. Until the commander-in-chief has come to a determination and has thereby completely altered the mission of the advanced guard, its infantry must be engaged as little as possible, being the arm intended for hard fighting and not for mere reconnoissance; for if one battalion is engaged, we shall soon have to bring up a second and a third, and thus will be drawn involuntarily into an error of the most serious and dangerous nature for an advanced guard to commit, namely that of drawing the main body of the force after it in a direction entirely inconsistent with the original plan of action.

Therefore the commander of an advanced guard should only launch his cavalry and artillery against the enemy; a small part of his infantry may occupy some important points which happen to be at hand—such as good look out places, favourable positions for artillery, defiles, &c.; but the main body will be kept together, so as to be at the disposal of the commander-in-chief whenever he may call upon it to act.

Our brigade forms the advanced guard of a larger corps, which is on the march to join the main body of the army.

Our brigade is in order of march; head of the advanced guard and support: three squadrons, **3 Bat.**, two guns, **1 Regiment, 2 Bat.**; main body: one squadron, **1 Regiment, 1 Bat.**, ten guns, **2 Regiment 3, 2, 1 Bats.**

The brigadier is with the support.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The scouts on the left flank come upon some infantry patrols of the enemy.

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Dispositions:

Two Squadrons. Move to the left from the head of the advanced guard, driving back the enemy's patrols; then ascertain the strength and position of the enemy or the direction of his march.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

Our cavalry meets with at least an equal force of the enemy's horsemen, behind whom some small detachments of cavalry are remarked.

Dispositions:

The Squadron. Belonging to the main body of the advanced guard trots forward; the whole of our cavalry assembles on the left flank; the colonel directs the reconnoissance, pushing forward one division an hour's march on the road originally followed.

Support. Inclines to the left; one company of **2 Regiment 3 Bat.** occupies point A; one company of **2 Bat.** occupies point B; the remaining companies close under cover in rear of the points named; the two guns halt for the present at B.

Main Body of Advanced Guard. Keeps moving on at present; its leading files halt in line with the support at A.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

Our cavalry has driven back the enemy's squadrons without fighting, but comes upon a position held by infantry and artillery and gets fired upon by the latter.

The main body of the advanced guard has meanwhile closed upon its leading files.

Dispositions:

Main Body of Advanced Guard. Forms up to the left in mass; **2 Regiment 1 Bat.** in first line; the two batteries trot forward, drawing to them the two guns from B; they find out a good position and open fire.

The Cavalry Regiment. Covers the batteries.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

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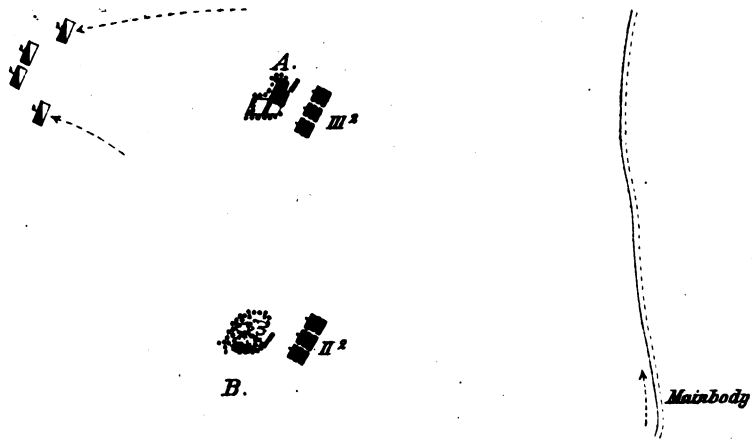
Fig. 2.



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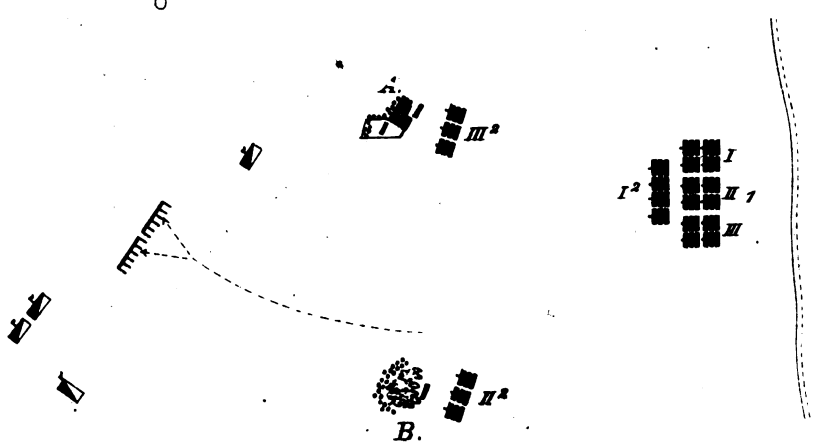

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Fig. 4

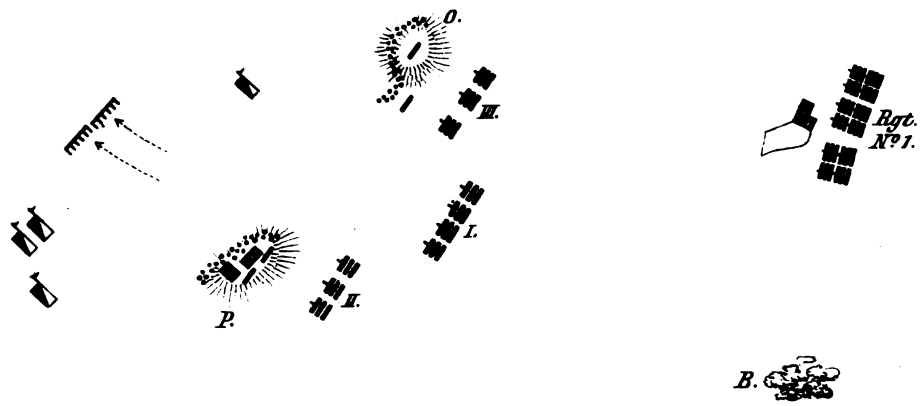
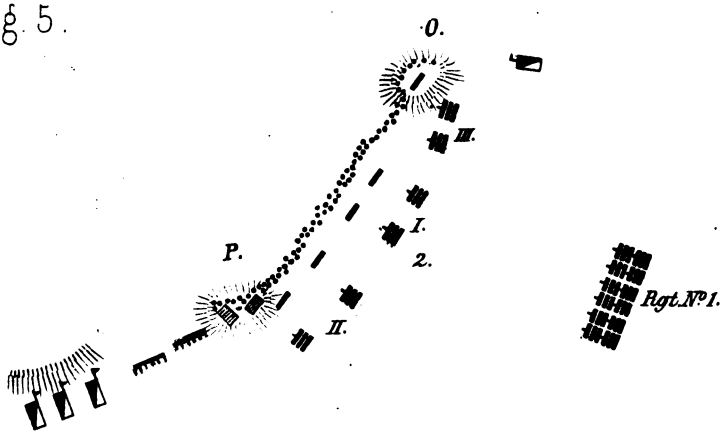


Fig. 5.



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Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy in the first instance replies to our fire with one battery, which, however, he soon withdraws, but other detachments of infantry are seen farther to the rear.

Dispositions:

The Batteries. Advance up to the position abandoned by the enemy.
The Cavalry Regiment. Covers this movement.
2 Regiment. Brings **1 Bat.** into line with the other two, then advances on section O—P.
1 Regiment. Moves up to A.
(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy shows altogether about one brigade of infantry, one regiment of cavalry, and one battery, occupying a favourable defensive position with this force.

The following order is received by our brigade: 'The army corps will follow the cross road to the right by G, so as to arrive at its destination as quickly as possible; the advanced guard brigade will establish itself firmly on the line O—P, holding that position for at least three hours (up to — o'clock); it will then follow the army corps, leaving only its cavalry in contact with the enemy.'

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Entrenches itself in the position O—P.
1 Regiment. Is concentrated in rear of the centre as reserve.
The Batteries. On the left wing.
The Cavalry Regiment. Three squadrons take post on the left and one on the right.
(The commander of the advanced guard reports that the orders of his superior have been carried out.)

Sixth Period.

The enemy begins to retire slowly from his position.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Advances and observes the retreating enemy without attacking him.

In due time the following order is received: 'The brigade will at once march off in the original direction.'

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Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Leaves one squadron to observe the retiring enemy, and when the brigade marches off the other three squadrons lead the way.

1 Regiment. Is put in movement; two battalions form the support, the colonel taking command both of the leading squadrons and of the support; the third battalion leads the main body.

2 Regiment. Is put into movement, forming part of the main body.

The Batteries. Join the main body, moving in rear of the battalion of **1 Regiment.**

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57th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 6 BATTALIONS, 2 BATTERIES, AND 4 SQUADRONS AS THE ADVANCED GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

Tactical Idea.

The advanced guard of a force which is in pursuit of an already-beaten enemy has a different mission to accomplish.

Not to mention the pursuit which it must undertake on the battle field, it will be called upon at one moment to take the offensive with the utmost impetuosity and recklessness, at another moment to gain time by holding stubbornly on to the enemy, varying its action according to the nature of the ground. Even if it does not expect to come into collision with the enemy's rear guard, the course recommended in the previous example as applicable to similar unexpected incidents, namely that of only feeling the way with cavalry and artillery, would here be out of place. Should the enemy's rear guard reach the entrance of a defile, a quick energetic offensive in the direction threatening the enemy's further retreat is the only correct course for the advanced guard to pursue, taking into consideration the important moral element, which is all in its favour. Should, on the other hand, the enemy be discovered in a strong defensive position, the advanced guard must first endeavour to hold on to him in front whilst one or both of his flanks are being turned. Should the advanced guard, however, discover in the course of the engagement that it has no longer to do with a mere rear guard alone, but that the main body of the enemy's force is before it, the situation will become such as described in the preceding example; and the advanced guard must be careful, lest by prematurely bringing its whole force into play, it should induce the main body of the army which is following it to commit itself to decisive action at a time or place not contemplated by the commander-in-chief. In the two first mentioned cases, that of taking the offensive at all odds, and that of standing fast during the single or double turning movements, infantry, strongly supported by artillery, will have the greatest field for action. Infantry is specially adapted to the stage of *standing fast*, as we here understand it, for this arm alone is able to occupy the enemy in such wise and to keep such a firm grip of him during all his movements as really to hold him fast and thus to make the turning movement possible.

A considerable body of troops marches early in the morning in pursuit of an enemy defeated the previous day.

Our brigade forms the advanced guard; head and support: four squadrons, one battery, **1 Regiment 1 & 2 Bats.**, the whole under command of the colonel of **1 Regiment**; main body: **1 Regiment 3 Bat.**, one battery, **2 Regiment 1, 2, & 3 Bats.**

The brigadier is with the support.

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First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The cavalry regiment which is leading comes upon some of the enemy's horsemen, who retire quickly behind some farm buildings occupied by infantry.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. One squadron observes the farm buildings; the remaining three squadrons pursue their march.

Support. The battery opens fire against the farm buildings whilst the infantry advances and makes a turning movement of attack.

Main Body of Advanced Guard. Keeps moving on.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Second Period.

As soon as the garrison of the farm buildings remark the advance of our infantry it retires hastily after a short skirmish, part of it whilst doing so falling into the hands of our squadron.

Dispositions:

Support. Resumes the original line of march.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

A pretty sharp artillery fire is heard, and our advanced cavalry reports that the enemy is occupying a strong position which it cannot force.

Dispositions:

Support. Moves along the road against the enemy's front, the battery going rapidly forward in advance and opening fire; if the enemy stands fast his left flank will be turned.

Main Body of Advanced Guard. The battery trots forward and opens fire on the left of the support; the infantry turns off to the right of the road, marching on A; each battalion forms line of company columns; if the enemy stands fast this body will attack and turn his left flank.

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57th Example.

Fig 1.

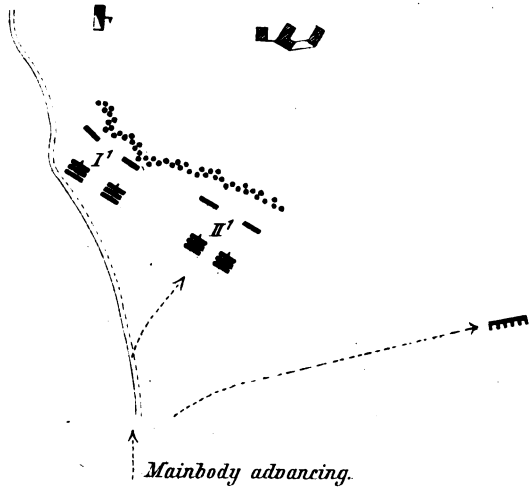
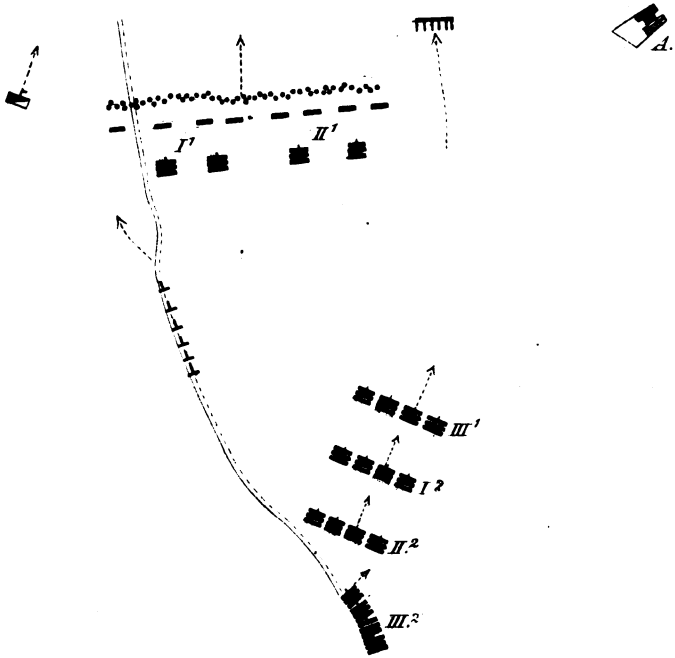


Fig 2.



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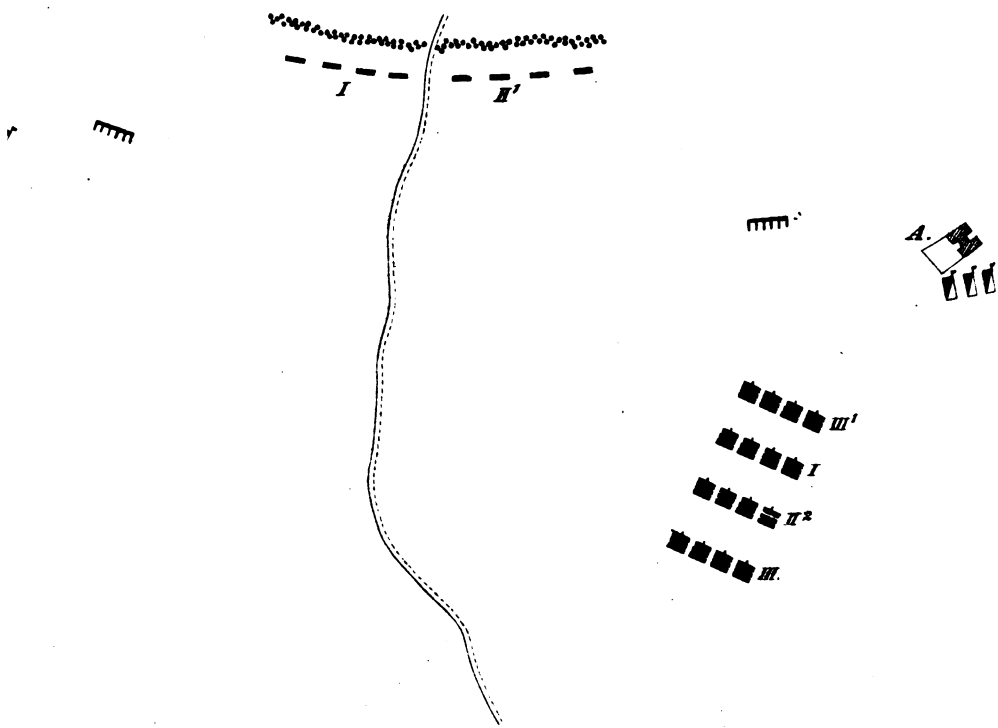
Enemy's position.

Fig. 3.



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Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy seems determined to make an obstinate defence in the position which he has occupied.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. **1 & 2 Bats.** (hitherto support) at once advance against the enemy's front, but without attacking him; they assume as broad a front as possible, as no counter attack need be feared; a battery takes post on each flank. **3 Bat.** is attached to **3 Regiment.**

Cavalry Regiment. The colonel of **1 Regiment** directs the frontal attack; one squadron is detached to the left in observation; three squadrons are withdrawn to the right flank.

2 Regiment. Deploys at A with **3 Bat., 1 Regiment** attached to it, and immediately advances to turn the enemy's left flank. The colonel of **2 Regiment** directs this movement.

The brigadier remains for the present on the right of the troops which are now commencing the frontal attack.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Fifth Period.

The enemy receives **1 Regiment**, which has now approached to within 600 paces of his position, with an extremely sharp fire of infantry and artillery; we remark some movements in the enemy's front line which lead us to suppose that he has made out our intention of turning his flank.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Advances and attacks.

Cavalry Regiment. Moves forward on the right and charges if the enemy gets into disorder.

2 Regiment. Changes direction half-left and moves on M.

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy has, before the commencement of our attack, withdrawn to another position in front of a defile, where he receives reinforcements.

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Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Continues to advance and holds on to the enemy in front; the latter is posted at the entrance of the defile N; four battalions will attack his left flank; one squadron is attached to the regiment.

The Batteries. Assemble on the right of **1 Regiment.**

Cavalry Regiment. One squadron is attached to **1 Regiment,** the other three squadrons are posted on the right of **2 Regiment.**

2 Regiment. Attacks the enemy's left wing, the colonel directing the attack.

(The commander of the advanced guard reports to the main body.)

Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy is obliged to stand fast to cover the retreat of a large train of waggons through the defile.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Moves up to within 500 paces of the enemy's front.

2 Regiment. Begins the attack as soon as it has deployed, taking the direction of F.

Eighth Period.

The enemy seems this time to intend awaiting the attack.

Dispositions:

Cavalry Regiment. Charges as soon as the infantry is at close quarters with the enemy.

The Batteries. Move forward into the captured position as soon as the infantry has occupied it.

When the force attacking F has reached to within 400 paces of that point,

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

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Fig. 4.

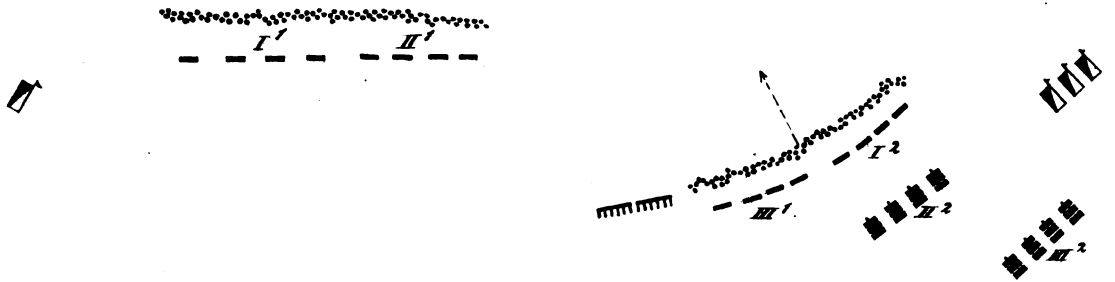

Fig. 5.

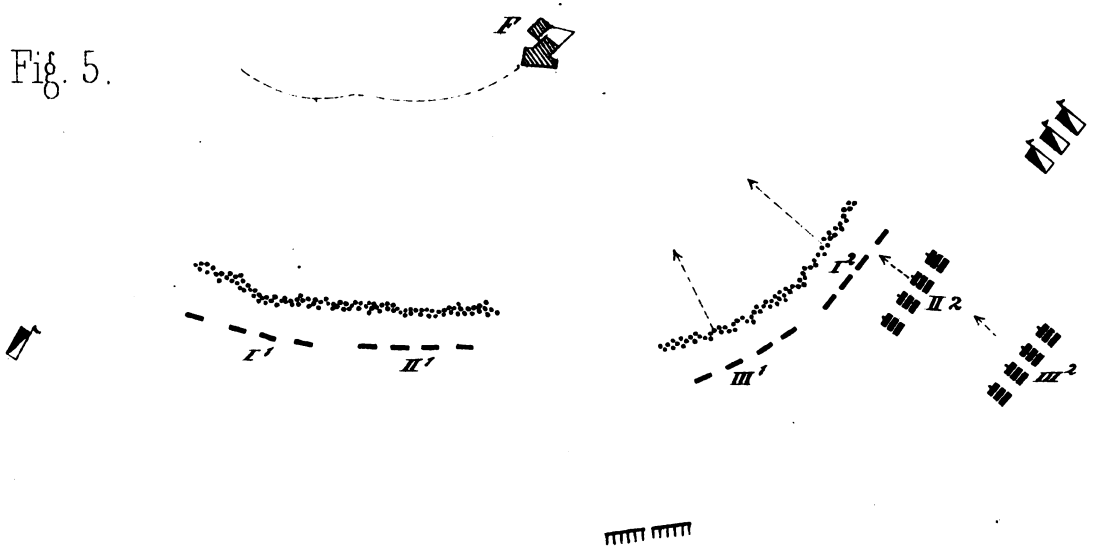

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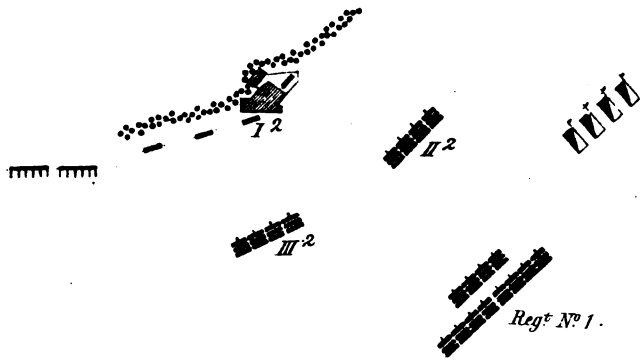
Fig. 6.



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Ninth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy abandons his position without awaiting our charge and goes to the rear in disorder towards the defile, which has meanwhile become free from obstruction.

The cavalry has charged, but without obtaining any great success, most of the enemy's troops being still in compact formations.

We receive the following order: 'The brigade will not pass through the defile at N.'

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Occupies the position which has been carried. One battalion in first line and two battalions in second line.

1 Regiment. Assembles in reserve behind **2 Regiment.**

The Batteries. Continue their fire against the defile.

Cavalry Regiment. Assembles in rear of the right.

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58th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 6 BATTALIONS, 2 BATTERIES, AND 4 SQUADRONS, AS THE REAR GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The conduct of a rear guard offers even greater difficulties than that of an advanced guard, for besides that the morale of the latter is generally higher than that of the former, it has the further advantage of being always able to count upon support from the main body which is following it, when its own strength is insufficient to enable it to make further progress: every hour that an advanced guard holds out, the nearer it is to success. A rear guard, on the other hand, is in a far less favourable situation, for whilst the enemy's advanced guard, with which it principally has to do, is being constantly reinforced, its own supports get farther and farther from it, and probably its isolation is increased in proportion to the strength of the attack made upon it. If, therefore, a rear guard were under all circumstances to allow itself to be drawn into a serious engagement, it would very often come to grief. On the other hand, it must not allow the pursuing enemy to advance without a check, but must gain time and room for the retreating main body; it must therefore force the enemy to go through all the preliminary stages of *reconnoissance*, *deployment*, *introduction*, and when he at last begins to carry out the real attack, it must draw off, to begin the same game anew on a future occasion.

Cavalry and artillery working in unison are the arms best suited for this task of delaying an enemy. The former must endeavour to get early information of the enemy's movements and to keep off his reconnoitring parties, whilst the latter forces him to be cautious, to adopt extended formations, to open fire and make him think that when artillery is in action infantry is not far off. The latter is the arm for completing the work—for stout resistance: when it is seriously engaged a decisive result must generally ensue; whilst the action of the other two arms has a wider field, and they may be withdrawn as soon as the object aimed at has been attained.

A rear guard, therefore, which has a particular task to accomplish, must first of all bring its cavalry and artillery into play, whilst comparatively small parties of infantry occupy special points of appui and its main body holds a good defensive position, upon which the two other arms will retire by degrees, covering in their turn afterwards the retreat of the infantry.

The pursuer will meanwhile endeavour to hold the rear guard fast, which can only be done by the action of infantry; and the fact that such is the pursuer's object will be reason enough for the commander of a rear guard to commit his whole infantry to action as seldom as possible; for the art of conducting an advanced guard, which consists in getting away from the enemy at the right moment, is too difficult and costs too much time for infantry.

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58th Example.

Fig 1.

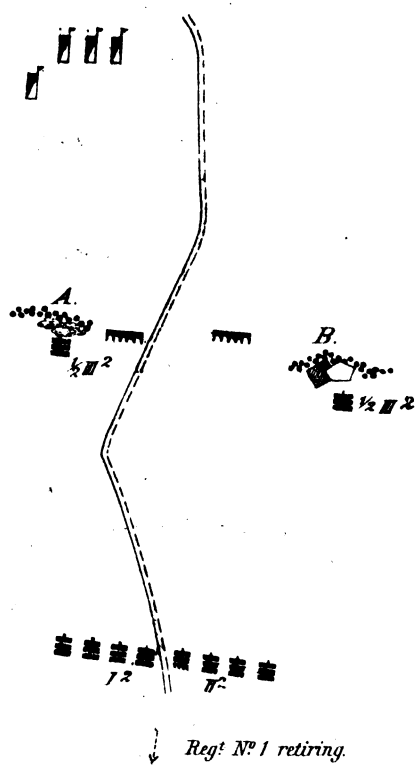

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Fig. 2.

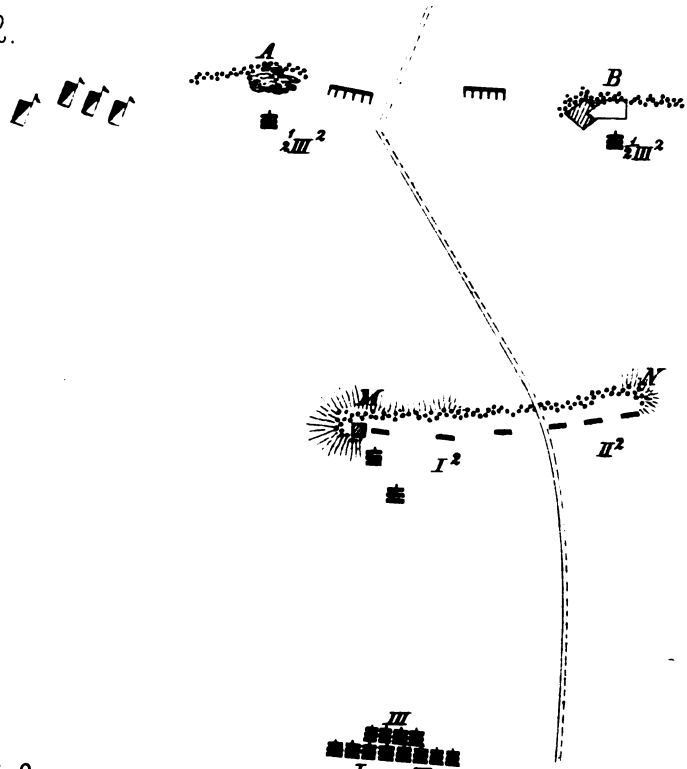
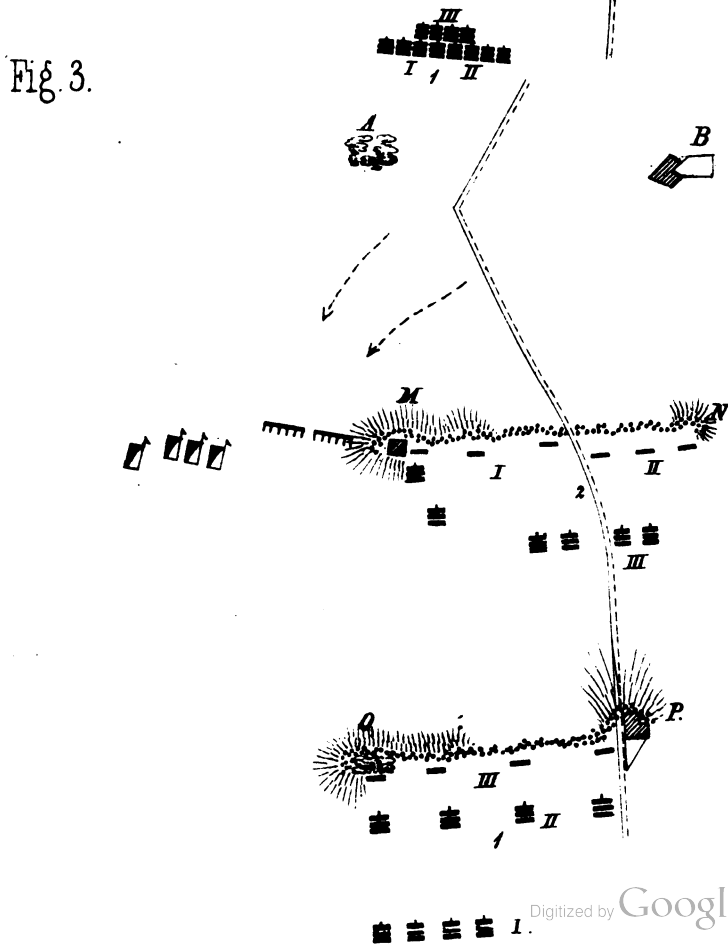


Fig. 3.



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Our brigade forms the rear guard of a larger body of troops, which has been beaten and is in retreat. Advanced party and support: four squadrons, two batteries, **2 Regiment 3 Bat.**; main body of the rear guard: **2 Regiment 2 & 1 Bats., 1 Regiment 3, 2, & 1 Bats.**

The brigadier is with the support.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The scouts report the approach of a cavalry detachment of the enemy, behind which some infantry is seen.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Halts and deploys, then advances against the enemy's cavalry.

Support. **2 Regiment 3 Bat.** occupies the points A and B, the batteries taking post between them.

Main Body of Rear Guard. **2 Regiment** halts and forms line of company columns on each side of the road; **1 Regiment** keeps moving on.

(The commander of the rear guard reports to the main body.)

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's cavalry gives way before our own; he brings two battalions into line and opens fire from one battery.

Dispositions:

The Batteries. Commence a steady fire.

The Cavalry Regiment. Retires slowly towards the left flank A.

2 Regiment. 1 & 2 Bats. Occupy the line M—N, holding the former point in greater strength.

1 Regiment. Is massed 800 paces in rear of M.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The enemy brings a second battery into action and shows three more battalions behind his right wing.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. 3 Bat. (support) retires from A and B, again halting behind the other two battalions of the regiment, and once more coming under command of its colonel.

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The Batteries. Retire in succession on M as soon as **3 Bat.** has reached the line M—N.

The Cavalry Regiment. Retires with the battery which was the last to move off.

1 Regiment. Occupies the line O—P.

(The commander of the rear guard reports to the main body.)

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy has by degrees brought five battalions into action against our left wing and two against our front; he begins to advance vigorously.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Retires, and is posted in reserve behind the left wing of **1 Regiment.**

1 Regiment. Reinforces and prolongs its left.

The Batteries. Retire in succession to the left flank of the position as soon as **2 Regiment** has reached it.

The Cavalry Regiment. Follows the battery last to move off and takes post on the left flank of the new position.

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy now shows a total strength of eight battalions, three batteries, and three squadrons; we see clouds of dust farther to the rear, which lead us to suppose that he has further reinforcements on the march.

Dispositions:

The Batteries. Increase their fire and follow the brigade in succession when it retreats to the line V—W.

The Cavalry Regiment. Retires with the last battery.

2 Regiment. Retires slowly.

1 Regiment. Retires slowly, remaining in order of battle.

(The commander of the rear guard reports to the main body.)

Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy shows some cavalry upon his right flank which makes a show of attacking our batteries.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Gallops forward.

The Batteries. Are warned of the approach of cavalry, retire quickly on the infantry, and again open fire.

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Fig. 4.

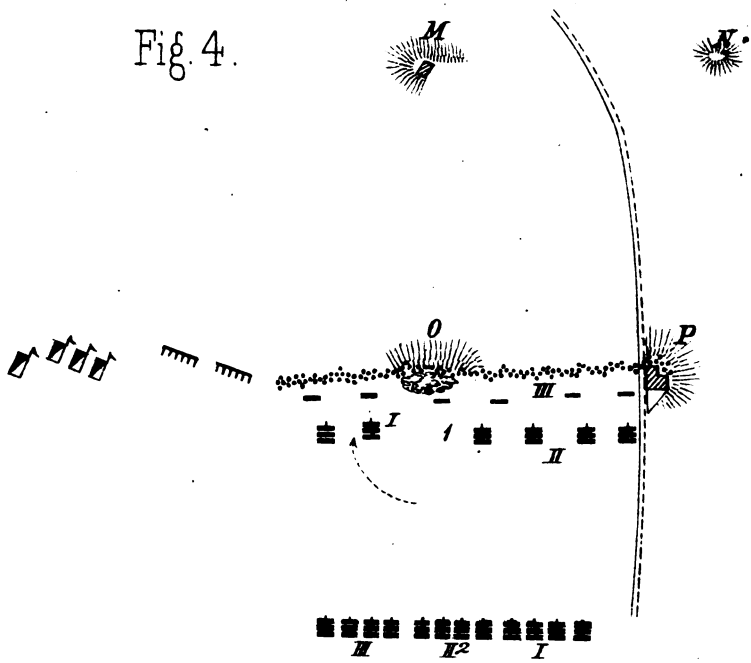

Fig. 5.

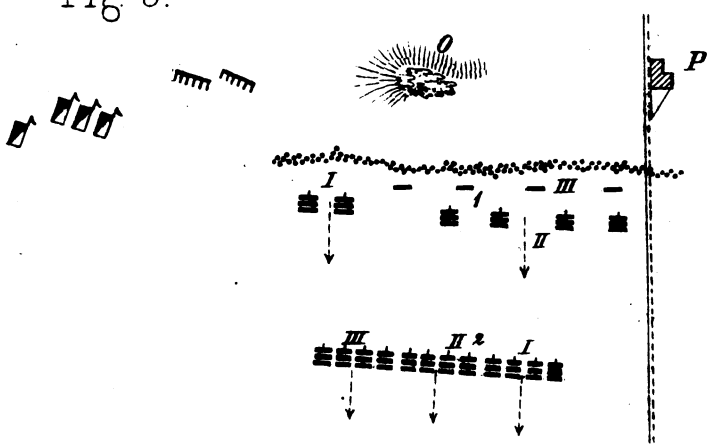

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Fig. 6.

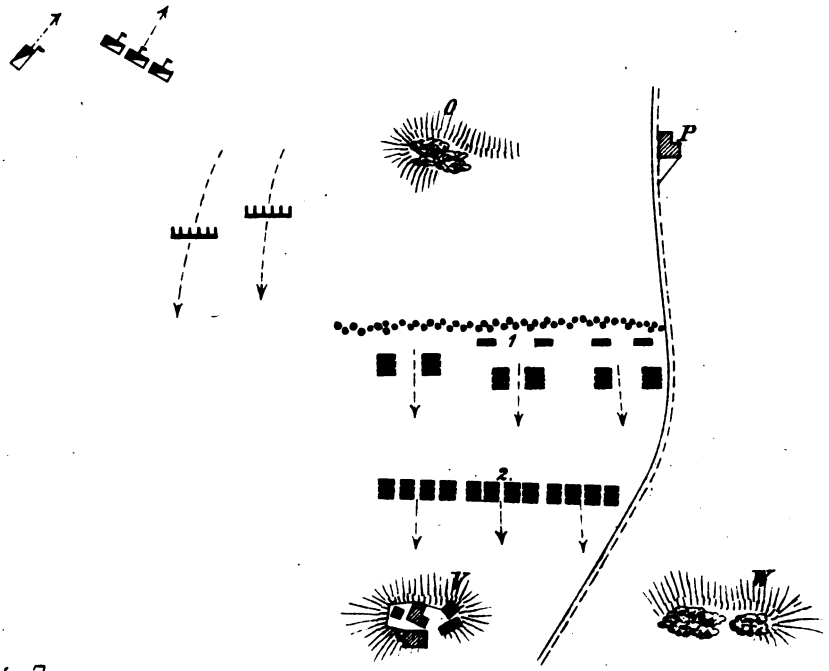
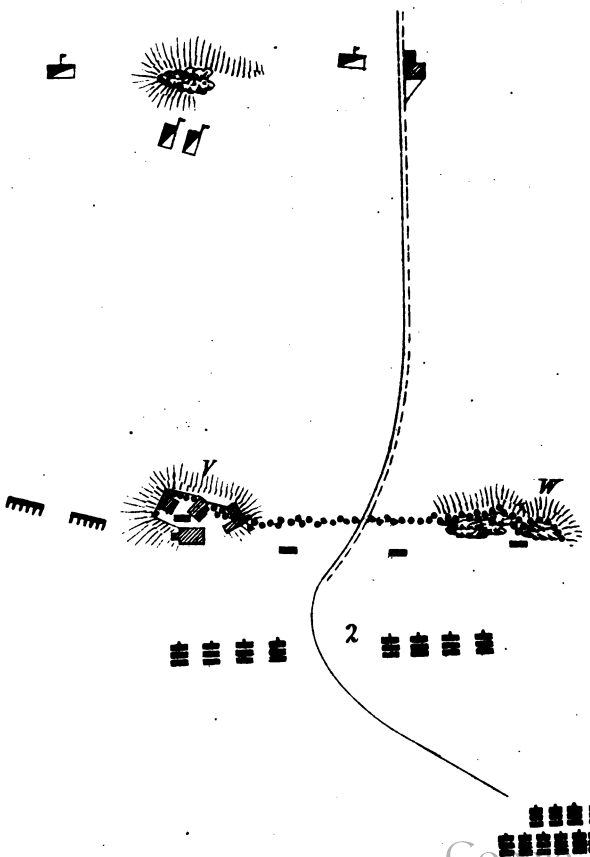


Fig. 7.



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Seventh Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy's cavalry avoids the attack, and his infantry appears no longer to advance.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. One battalion in first line occupying section V—W, two battalions in second line.

1 Regiment. Massed in reserve near the road 800 paces in rear of **2 Regiment.**

The Batteries. In position on the left flank near V.

The Cavalry Regiment. Remains in front.

(The commander of the rear guard reports to the main body.)

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59th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 7 BATTALIONS, 3 BATTERIES, AND 4 SQUADRONS, ACTING AS THE REAR GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

TACTICAL IDEA.

The action of a rear guard is somewhat modified when it is distinctly ordered to hold a position for a certain specified time. But even then it must use its utmost endeavours to put off a decisive result as long as possible, whereas on the contrary, the enemy, if he understands the situation rightly, will do his utmost to bring matters to a head with the least possible delay. Although the attitude of a rear guard must be mainly regulated according to the principles of the defensive (resistance, and counter attack), yet because it will be necessary to delay the crisis to the utmost, particular strength must be given to the stage of resistance at the cost of the counter attack, and this is one of the exceptional cases in which infantry and even artillery may and ought to make thorough use of their intrenching tools, constructing rifle pits, barricades, abattis, and such like. It will therefore be advisable to keep back rather a smaller force than usual in reserve, and that in rear of the flanks; it will also be necessary to give the fullest effect to our fire by making artificial cover and by reinforcing our front line.

Our brigade is in bivouac together with the cavalry and artillery attached to it.

We receive the following order: 'The brigade, with the cavalry and artillery attached to it, will at once occupy the line G H and hold it for at least three hours (up to — o'clock); it will then follow as rear guard in the direction of W.' (The position to be occupied is 1,800 paces in front of the brigade).

After the men have fallen in and formed up, and after the cavalry have mounted;

Caution to the colonels, commandants, and commanders of squadrons and batteries: 'The brigade is to occupy that line (GH), and hold it for at least three hours (up to — o'clock).'

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59th Example.

Fig. 1.

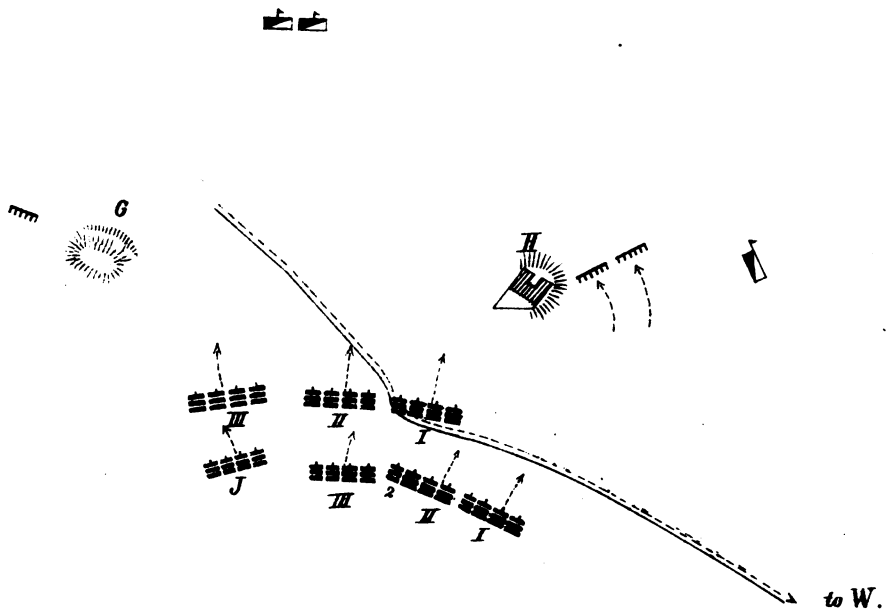

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Fig. 2.

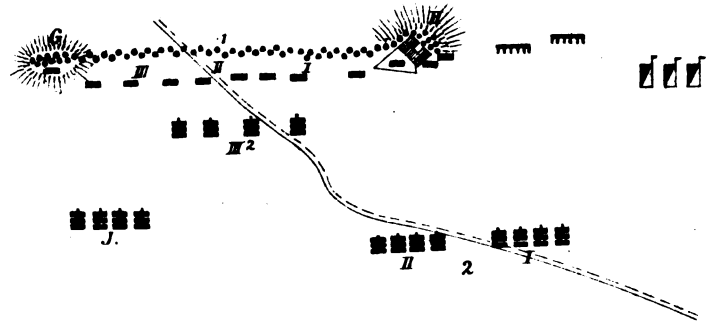
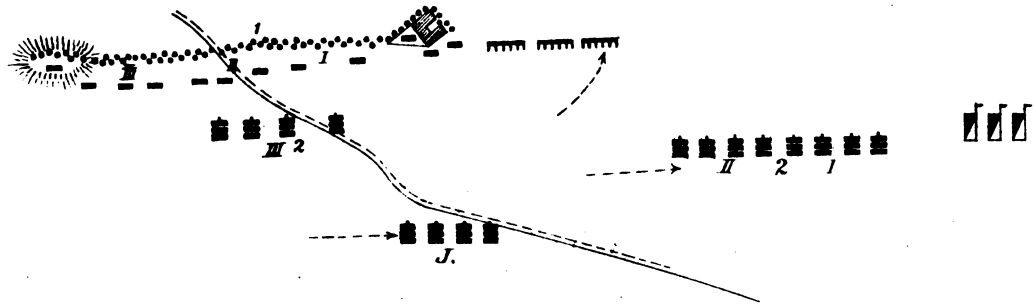


Fig. 3.



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Dispositions:

1 Regiment. Will occupy in first line the front of the whole section; **2 Regiment 3 Bat.** being attached to the regiment as second line.

2 Regiment. Will detach its **3 Bat.** as second line to **1 Regiment.** **1 & 2 Bats.** will remain in reserve 400 paces in rear of the right wing.

The Rifle Bat. Will be in reserve in rear of the left wing.

The Artillery. Two batteries will take post on the right and one battery on the left.

The Cavalry Regiment. Will trot forward, three squadrons reconnoitring to at least 1,000 paces in advance.

The right flank is specially to be guarded because our further line of retreat towards W runs behind it.

The whole will at once move into position.'

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The cavalry, which has trotted forward, soon sends word that some of the enemy's scouts, and behind them some infantry, are already to be seen.

Dispositions:

The Artillery. Moves quickly into position and opens fire as soon as the enemy comes within range.

The Cavalry Regiment. Covers the batteries and continues its reconnoissance.

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy brings a battery into fire at long range; we also see three of his battalions advancing rapidly.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Three squadrons take post on the right, one squadron remaining on the left.

Third Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

We remark some more battalions of the enemy, which are directed against our right flank.

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Dispositions:

The Artillery. The battery from the left flank joins those on our right.

2 Regiment. The two battalions in reserve take post on the right rear of the batteries, forming line of company columns.

The Rifle Bat. Takes post in rear of the right wing of **1 Regiment**, in place of the last named two battalions.

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy has also brought three batteries into action, and we also remark three battalions which are moving against the right wing of our brigade, their front covered by clouds of skirmishers; the enemy maintains a passive attitude in front of **1 Regiment.**

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. **1 Bat.** is deployed in front line on the right of the batteries; **2 Bat.** in second line; **3 Bat.** is ordered up from the left where it had been attached to **1 Regiment**, and takes post in rear of the right wing of the other two battalions.

(The enemy's attack seems to be directed against the right wing of our brigade.)

Fifth Period.

(*Fig.* 5.)

The enemy, having now approached to within 1,000 paces of our position, directs seven battalions against our right wing and three battalions against our left wing.

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. The right battalion stands fast whilst the other two battalions and the **Rifle Bat.** occupy the line R—S.

The colonel superintends this operation.

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Fig. 4.

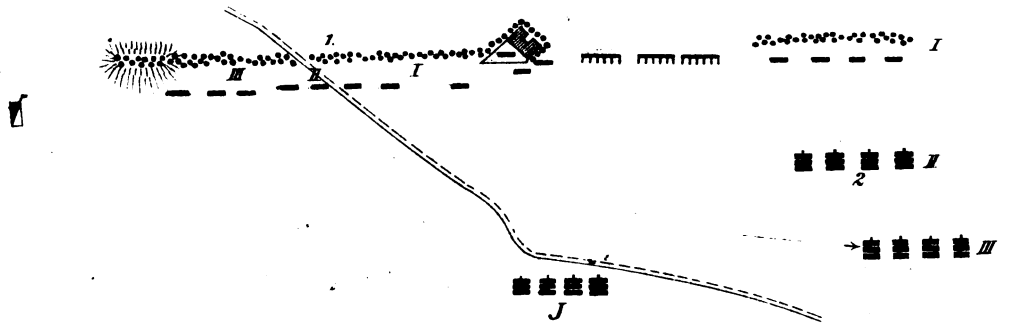

Fig. 5.

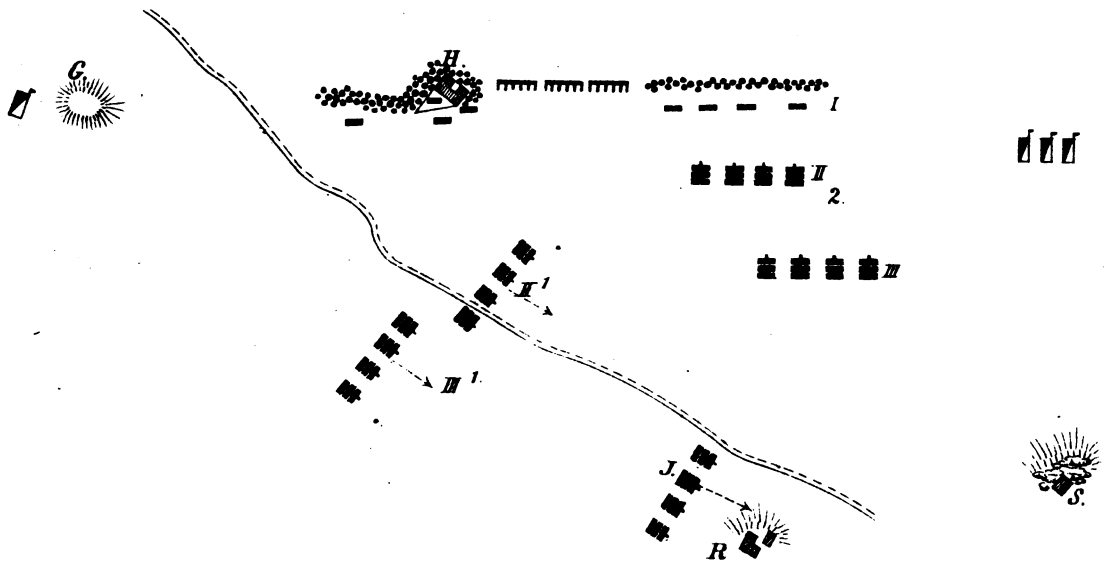

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Fig. 6.

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Sixth Period.

(*Fig.* 6.)

The enemy now advances vigorously.

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Reinforces its first line, and upon the caution 'Retire' moves back to the position R—S which has meanwhile been occupied.

The Artillery. One battery retires quickly to R; the other two batteries increase their fire.

1 Regiment. The battalion which had been left in position now retires upon the others.

Seventh Period.

The enemy's left wing has been brought to a halt by our heavy artillery and infantry fire.

As soon as the position R—S has been at least partially occupied:

Dispositions:

2 Regiment. Receives a signal to retire.

The Artillery. Increases its fire to the utmost, and when **2 Regiment** has nearly reached the new position, gallops back to S.

The Cavalry Regiment. Covers the retreat.

Eighth Period.

(*Fig.* 7.)

The enemy's infantry stops its advance, but his cavalry dashes forward to charge **2 Regiment** or the batteries.

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Charges.

The enemy's cavalry gives way; our cavalry slowly follows **2 Regiment.**

Dispositions:

1 Regiment. The brigade being in retreat, **1 & 2 Bats.**, two batteries, and four squadrons become the advanced parties and

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support of the rear guard; the whole under the colonel of **1 Regiment**: **3 Bat.** is attached to **2 Regiment.**

2 Regiment. Forms in column of route on the road leading to W, followed by **1 Regiment 3 Bat.**

The Rifle Bat. Follows **1 Regiment 3 Bat.**

The Artillery. Two batteries remain with the support and one battery follows the **Rifle Bat.**

The Cavalry Regiment. Is placed under the orders of the colonel of **1 Regiment.**

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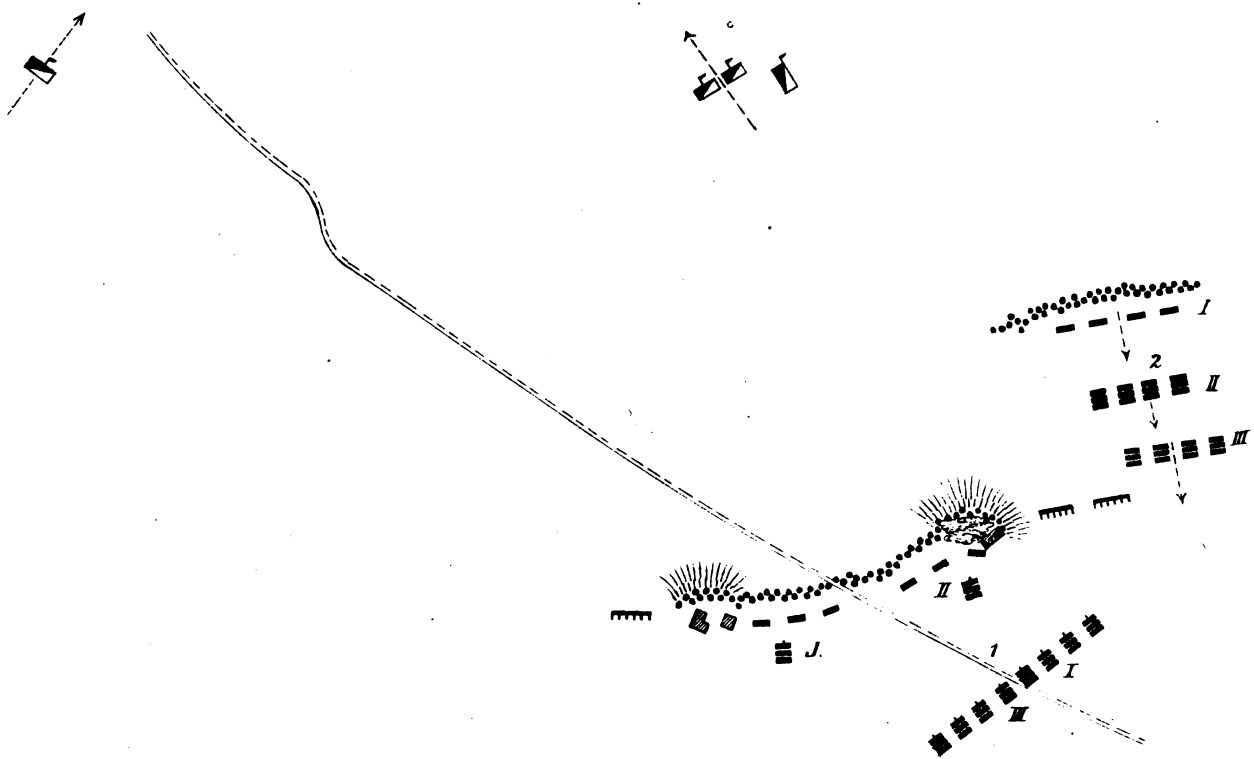
Fig. 7.



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60th EXAMPLE.

A MIXED BRIGADE OF 7 BATTALIONS, 3 BATTERIES, AND 4 SQUADRONS, AS THE REAR GUARD OF A LARGER BODY OF TROOPS.

Tactical Idea.

The most favourable position for a rear guard to take up is in front of a defile which the pursuing enemy must either pass or can only avoid by a widely extended turning movement which will take up much time. hould a rear guard come to a defile of this nature suitable for defence, it must at once occupy the outlet on its own side. To take post with a defile behind you is only allowable under very peculiar circumstances, and to do so must always be a hazardous measure. For instance, such a course will be justified if a portion of the force which has to be covered by the rear guard has not got through the defile; if, on the other hand, the ground in front of a defile is occupied so as to give the main body of the army the opportunity of resuming the offensive, the rear guard then ceases to be a rear guard proper, and assumes the peculiar characteristics of an advanced guard.

A rear guard occupying the outlet of a defile on the side farthest from the enemy must be prepared to take the offensive energetically at the right moment. This opportunity will present itself when part only of the enemy's force has debouched from the pass, whilst the remainder is still entangled in it. The offensive movement must not be made too soon, otherwise such premature action would thoroughly enlighten the enemy as to the intentions of the rear guard commander, and would probably make him take measures to defeat them; at the same time, however, the blow should not be dealt too late, otherwise the enemy will find time to establish himself firmly, and possibly to oppose to the rear guard forces equal to its own. This problem of timing the offensive movement so as to be neither *too soon* nor *too late* is the difficult one which has to be solved by every force acting on the defensive; the fact, however, that there can be here no doubt as to the *direction* of the attack, to a certain extent lessens the difficulty in the case before us. This attack will be directed either against one or both flanks of the enemy, or, under peculiarly favourable circumstances, against his centre, right through into the very pass itself, so as to cut asunder the portion of his forces which has already debouched from the defile, and to separate it from the main body which is following after. If we cannot otherwise get information as to the enemy's strength, we must force him to reveal it by employing cavalry and artillery, sometimes even some infantry, on the other side of the defile; our principal force, however, must remain on this side of the pass, and chiefly massed upon the point from which it is intended to make the offensive movement.

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Our brigadier has received instructions again to advance for the purpose of preventing the pursuing enemy as long as possible from passing through a defile, which may be turned on the right at a distance of about three hours march, and on the left at a distance of about two and a-half hours march.

Our brigade advances in two columns; the advanced guard (three and a-half squadrons, the rifle battalion, and one battery) has already been pushed forward through the defile; right column, **1 Regiment** and one battery; left column, **2 Regiment** and one battery; a division of cavalry has been detached to each flank in observation of the other passes.

First Period.

(*Fig.* 1.)

The advanced cavalry reports the approach of two of the enemy's squadrons.

Dispositions:

Advanced Guard. The **Rifle Bat.** occupies the two points A and B (about 500 paces from the entrance to the defile); the **Battery** takes post at B, the **Cavalry** moves forward against that of the enemy.

1 Regiment. Occupies the position V—W in two lines, the front line being the stronger.

2 Regiment. Takes post in reserve, as far as possible under cover, 400 paces behind the right wing of the first line.

The Artillery. One battery looks out a position near V, whilst the other battery remains in reserve with **2 Regiment.**

Second Period.

(*Fig.* 2.)

The enemy's cavalry, having been reinforced, forces ours to retire; the enemy then brings a battery into action and sends about three battalions to the front.

Dispositions:

Advanced Guard. The **Cavalry** trots back through the defile and takes post near **2 Regiment.**

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60th Example.

Fig. 1.

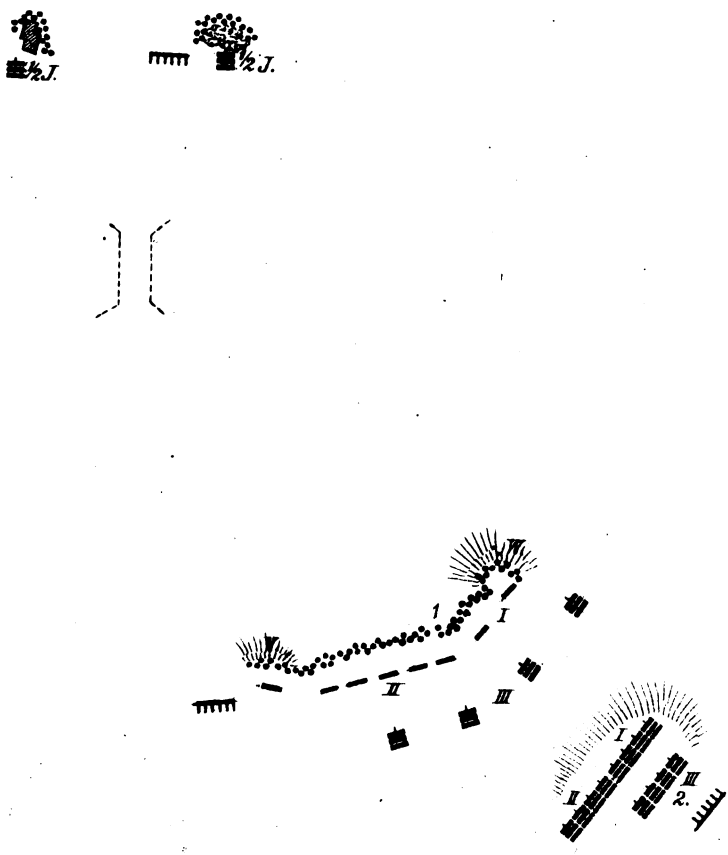

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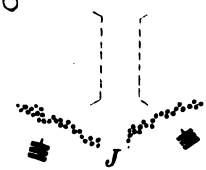
Fig. 2



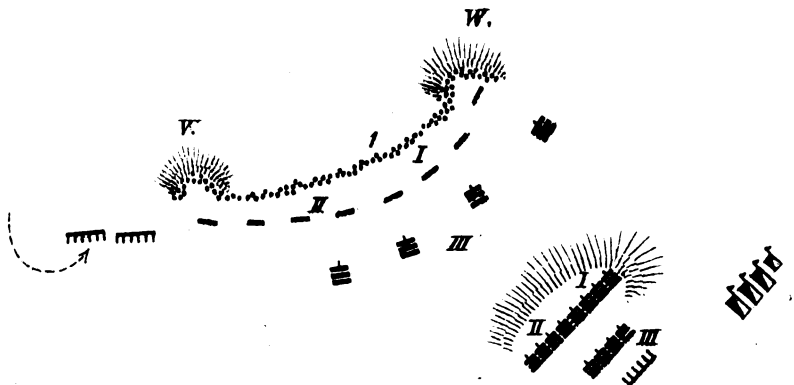
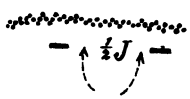
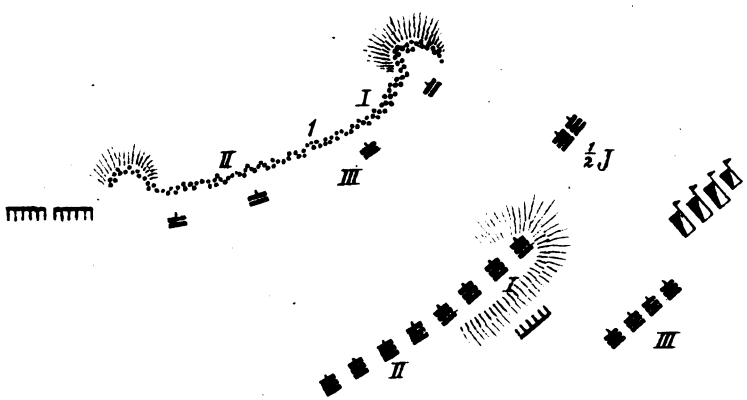


Fig. 3





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The **Battery** likewise retires through the defile as soon as the **Cavalry** has gone to the rear, and takes post on the left of **1 Regiment** near the battery already there. The **Rifle Bat.** retires quickly through the defile, following the **Battery**, and afterwards occupying the outlet on this side.

Third Period.

Some horse patrols of the enemy dash into and through the defile, receiving the fire of our riflemen; the enemy also pushes a battalion directly against the defile and brings two batteries into action against our left wing.

Dispositions:

The Rifle Bat. Retires slowly, and takes post behind the right wing of **1 Regiment.**

Fourth Period.

(*Fig.* 3.)

The first battalion of the enemy having doubled through the defile, has occupied some ground close to its outlet; a second and third battalion follow, whilst a battery at the same time unlimbers against our right wing.

Dispositions:

The Rifle Bat. Two companies extend along the obstruction (river, marsh, wood, or such like) and try to drive away the battery which is firing on our right wing.

1 Regiment. Opens fire and reinforces its first line from the second.

2 Regiment. Forms line of company columns at full interval, with two battalions in first line, which is overlapped to the right by the second; the regiment is then ordered to attack.

Fifth Period.

The enemy has now got four battalions, one battery, and one squadron on this side of the defile, and we see more troops coming on;

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a third battery has also opened fire against our left wing, but that which had been cannonading our right wing has been driven away by our riflemen.

Dispositions:

The Battery. Which has been in reserve, gallops forward into first line and fires salvoes.

2 Regiment. Advances to attack, moving by the left of the battery.

1 Regiment. The left wing battalion remains in position whilst the others join in the attack.

The Rifle Bat. Stands fast.

Sixth Period

(*Fig.* 4.)

The enemy's artillery and cavalry retire hastily through the defile, a part of his infantry also follows this movement in disorder, but another part tries to maintain itself where it is.

Signal: 'The Whole Advance.'

Dispositions:

The Cavalry Regiment. Advances to attack, moving by the right of the battery.

Seventh Period.

The enemy hurries back through the defile, suffering severe loss, but is rallied on the other side by a strong force of infantry and artillery.

Signal: 'The Whole Halt.'

Our brigade receives orders to follow the main body of the army.

Dispositions:

The Rifle Bat. Assembles and forms columns of route, moving on P.

1 Regiment. Retires and assembles, then moves into column of route, following the **Rifle Bat.**

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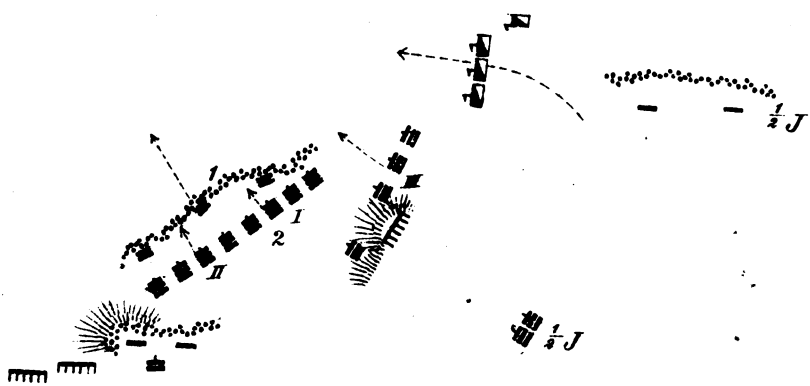
Fig. 4.



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2 Regiment. Forms the advanced party and support of the rear guard, having attached to it the cavalry regiment and two batteries.

The Artillery. Two batteries are attached to **2 Regiment**; the other battery follows **1 Regiment.**

The Cavalry Regiment. Is attached to **2 Regiment.**

Our brigade retires on P.

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